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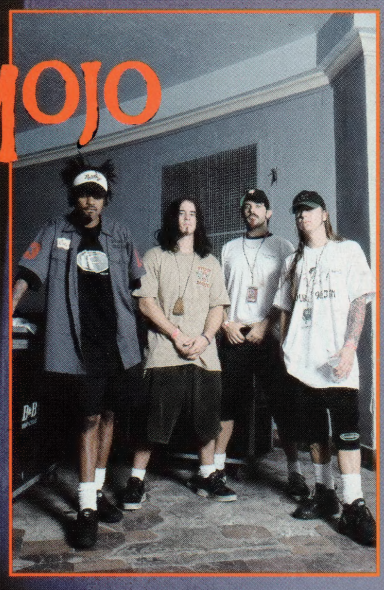

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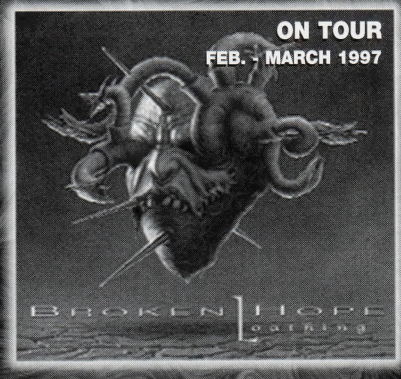

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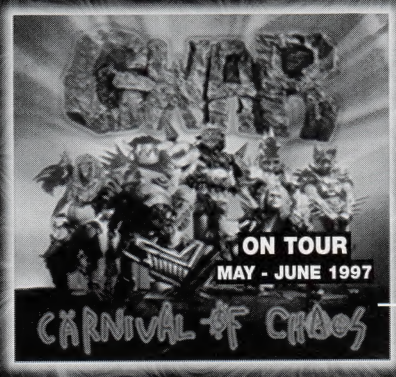

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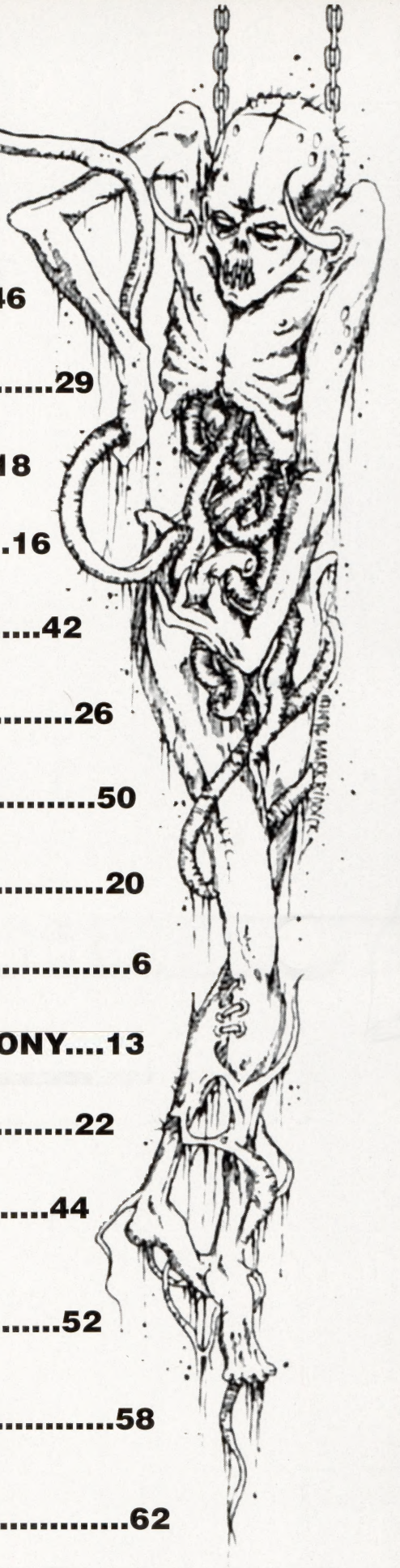

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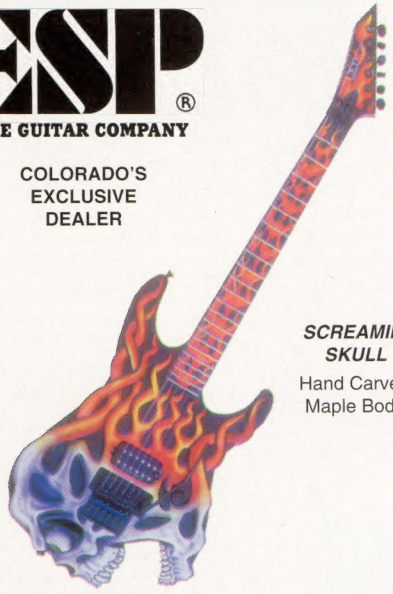

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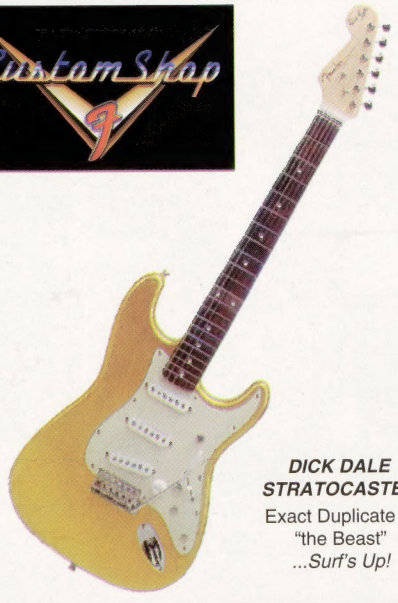

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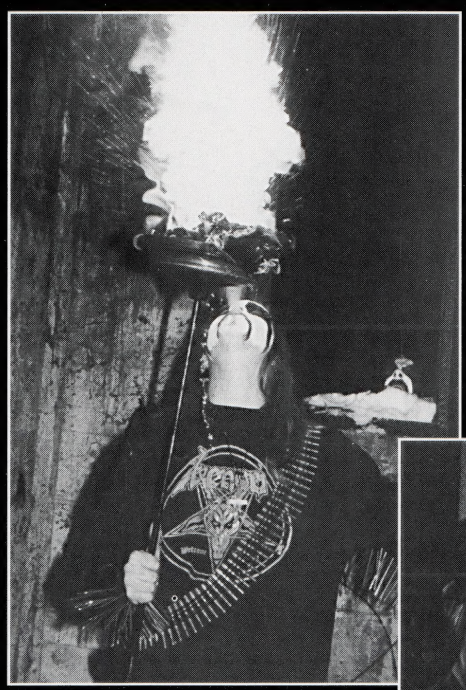
SUMMON

Not everyone is given the unique opportunity to witness the conception, development, and success of a group of artists. To witness a band's dreams turning into reality, those proverbial 'dues' being paid, all the hard work and dedication, is almost like being a part of it all. I must consider myself extremely fortunate to know **SUMMON**, an up and coming young black metal trio residing in Lansing, Michigan. Sick of the everyday black metal bandwagon bullshit that is strained daily through the underground sieve, **SUMMON** is fighting to stay uncorrupted by a scene littered with idiot savants, fantasy dictators, and rebels hell-bent for image.

The origin of the band spawns from the ruins of another underground black metal unit known as MASOCHIST. Due to some personal and creative conflicts within



the group, Xaphan (black howls, guitars, and keys), Necromodeus (bass and agonizing screams), and Amduscius (drums), parted ways with founder/guitarist/vocalist T'Chort, and decided to continue together under the moniker **SUMMON**. With the songs that Xaphan had written while still jamming with MASOCHIST, the group found a new musical freedom, and an ability to create more as a band. "**SUMMON** is much more of a collaboration than [previous projects], it's not just me writing the songs," Xaphan, the group's mouthpiece, explains to me, "It's so much better now. Like with this new song, I had written this song on a four track and we instantly all had it down. Our song writing is becoming much more developed."

This eradication of unproductive obstacles, coupled with the band's combined experience from playing with other local groups, helped **SUMMON** immediately attack the underground. "I've had a lot of experience learning what not to do with a band," comments Xaphan, referring to his stints with MASOCHIST and long time underground death/doom metallers, LUCIFER'S HAMMER. "It gave me a lot more insight. People build themselves up to you, they say "I can do this for you and I can do that!" And then it doesn't happen. The attitude with **SUMMON** is that we're not going to wait for someone to do things for us, we're going to do them ourselves! There's no other way really. What can an Indie label do that we can't do ourselves?"

The result of this motivation? A highly heralded demo, entitled *Fire Turns Everything Black*, which caught the ears of the underground completely by surprise. After some intensive distribution of the demo by the band to 'zines and fans—around 400 copies—an additional 500 copies were pressed by Grinding Peace Records, a label and distribution based in Michigan. With the sweeping success of just their debut demo, the band decided to gather funds to produce their debut CD. With some distribution, manufacturing and marketing help from Grinding Peace, *Dark Descent of Fallen Souls* became a reality. Eleven songs of polished BLASPHEMY-style black metal, complete with a cover of MAYHEM's classic anthem "Deathcrush", *Dark Descent* is definitely a unique debut from a fledgling American act. The progression of the band's musicianship since the demo is instantly noticed. Flowing keyboard pieces now punctuate their black metal opuses, plus varying styles keep the over black metalled listener from becoming bored. "I think we've progressed quite a bit. The album's a lot tighter than our other stuff. I think that we've gotten into using different tempos more, too. For a while, we were at a point where everything was just really fast, really chaotic. The CD is a little doomier, with the keys and spoken word vocals. We tried to slow it down a little and experiment a little more, get back to an old school feel. You know, stuff that makes you want to just smash everything." states Xaphan, referring to the recent evolution of **SUMMON**'s music. "On the demo we tried to achieve totally barbaric, Satanic imagery, but on this newer stuff we tried to go for atmosphere, eerie feelings—not so much the power of Satan and what not, but the power from within." Xaphan also noted that the band continues to experiment with the 'old school' black metal style, which has recently become very popular throughout the scene, to help the music become more accessible to fans dumbfounded by the chaotic blasting that is a benchmark of scene. "I don't think we try to sound like anybody else, but you can't help having what you're listening to and what you're into reflect in your music.

"The studio that we went to was a good studio, to a certain extent. The guy who produced it, Rob Tylak, kind of limited our sound. I mean he gave us a good clean sound, but he's not really into black metal. Eventually, we hope to work with someone who's more into the underground sound. He gave us a compacted sound, that would be good for a band like PINK FLOYD, but for heavy, aggressive black metal, you really need that raw edge. I'm still young, I'm only 21, but I've got a grasp on what I want to do with black metal. I know what I like and I know what will work good. Now it's all about creating that atmosphere." **SUMMON** has recently made a move to create an even more powerful atmosphere by trying out an additional guitarist.

Xaphan, like many serious black metallers, is very critical of the scene and the direction it has taken since all the drama that has occurred in Norway. "It seems like a lot of 'zines I've done interviews with lately are all still wrapped up in this Norwegian thing, all the church burnings and stuff. I'm not downing it or anything, it was a bold statement, but I get asked a lot of stupid question about this stuff. I get asked things like, 'Have you killed people?'—dumb shit like that. Even if I did, why would I be dumb enough to incriminate myself?!? It's pointless! This scene has totally lost it's direction on what black metal's all about. It's supposed to be about talented music, and talented individuals expressing themselves in a demonic manner. Now it's just, 'What have you done to be so evil?' If your more concerned with your evil acts than what you've accomplished musically—I don't know. Do you have spend half of your life in jail to be considered 'true'?"

Joker Lokison

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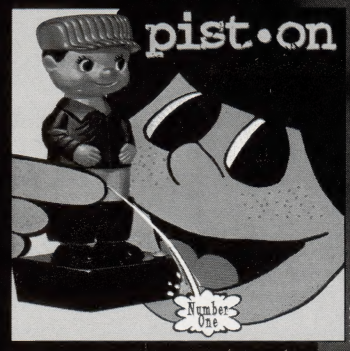

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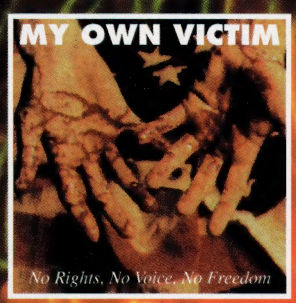

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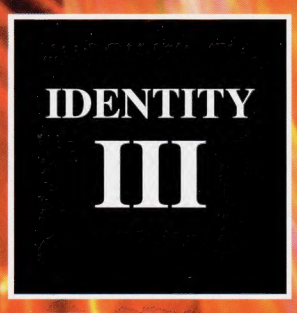

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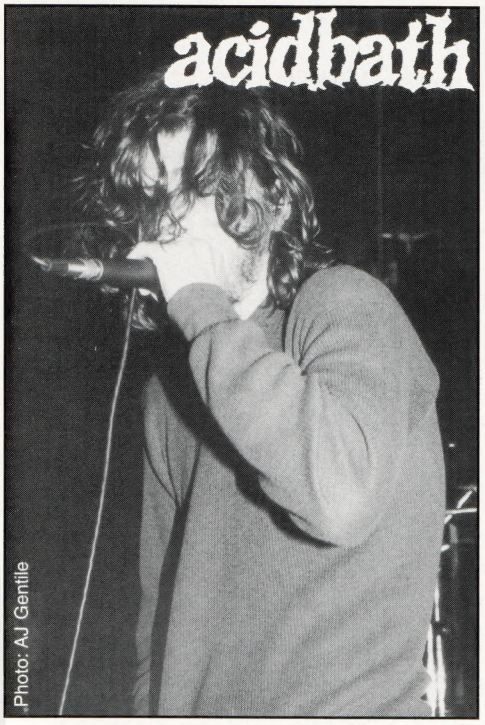


From the swamps of Louisiana come ACID BATH. Formed in '91, they play a sort of trippy, intense music—quite hard to categorize, really. The aggressive guitars, fast beats and intense, moody vocals found on their latest release, *Paegan Terrorism Tactics*, characterize their unique sound. ACID BATH is: Mike Sanchez (guitar), Sammy Duet (guitar), Audie Pitre (bass), Jimmy Kyle (drums) and Dax Riggs (vox). Dax spoke with us upon returning to the bayou from the band's latest tour.

Pit: ***How would you describe your music?***

Dax: It's some kind of pure form of death rock. Like it's supposed to be, just like it sounds—death rock. It's death and doom affiliated. I don't know, it's really a hard question for me. I just think of it as—we just try to do all kinds of different things inside the context of, you know, the death rock thing.

What does* ACID BATH *refer to?

We're putting all kinds of different elements together. We don't just do it abruptly; we get into the whole scheme of things. It's a lot of different elements of each member, um, disintegrating and becoming something else, you know. Like me and Sammy, we get each other into our own music, but we're in different places, musically.

What's your musical background?

Pretty much the same as everybody else that's into metal. What I listen to now is a lot of David Bowie and older music, psychedelic stuff. And Sammy's more on the cutting edge of like black metal. I don't want to make this all about that. . .

What do you want to talk about—do you have any hobbies?

Well, I behead roadkill and save the skulls. Let's see, I'd like to say something about *Paegan Terrorism Tactics*. . .

OK. . . what does it mean?

It's like a wave of thinking that is anti-Christian. A lot of people are in on this. I'm making commercials for Paganism and the death of, you know, Christian organization. It's like a dark wavelength of thought that many people are on—*Paegan Terrorism Tactics*. I believe it's gaining momentum as we speak.

Why do you say it's 'terrorism'?

There's an established thing right now, so anything outside that is considered by them—it would be their codename for all activity that is like ourselves, or other bands.

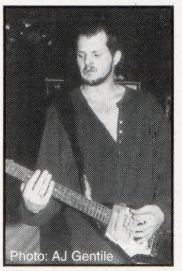
But you don't see it as terrorism?

Right. I think it's a revolution.

What are you doing to further it?

Singing some songs. Getting high. Talking to people.

What's the main thing wrong with Christianity?



I think it oppresses people, and that makes for un-well-rounded individuals. It's the death of millions. And that's it, really. They cover things up; I know that now. They shouldn't be able to thrive after what they've done and covered up in the past. The sex scandals, for one. I believe there are a lot of things we don't know about. I feel like it's kind of a company—with a very bad history of, well, burning people.

Errin Klein

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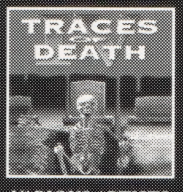

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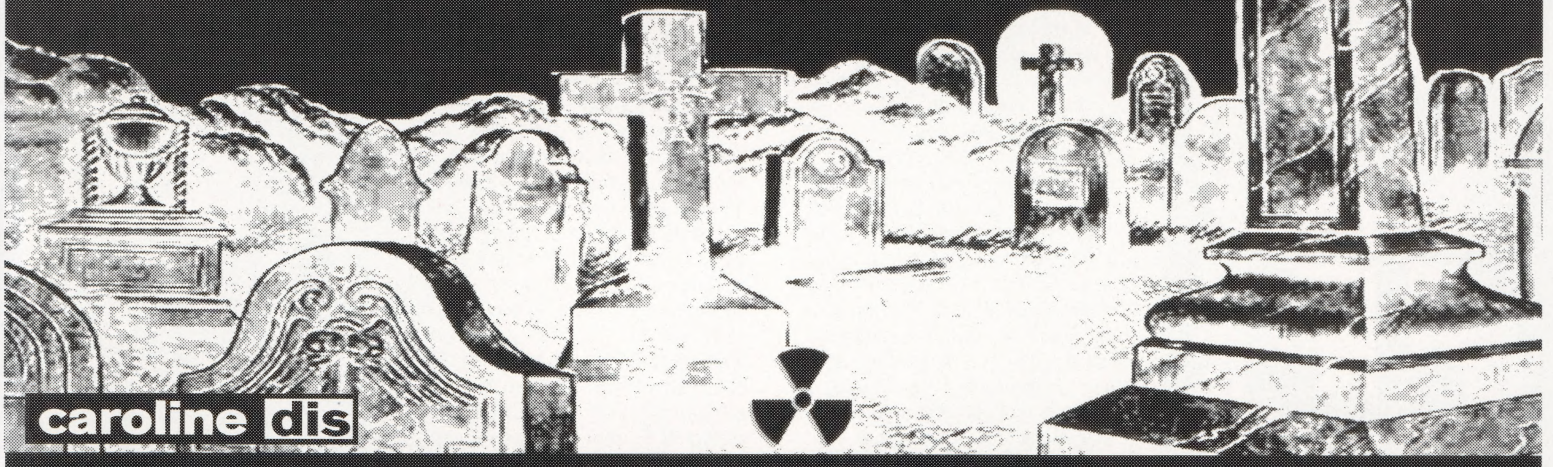

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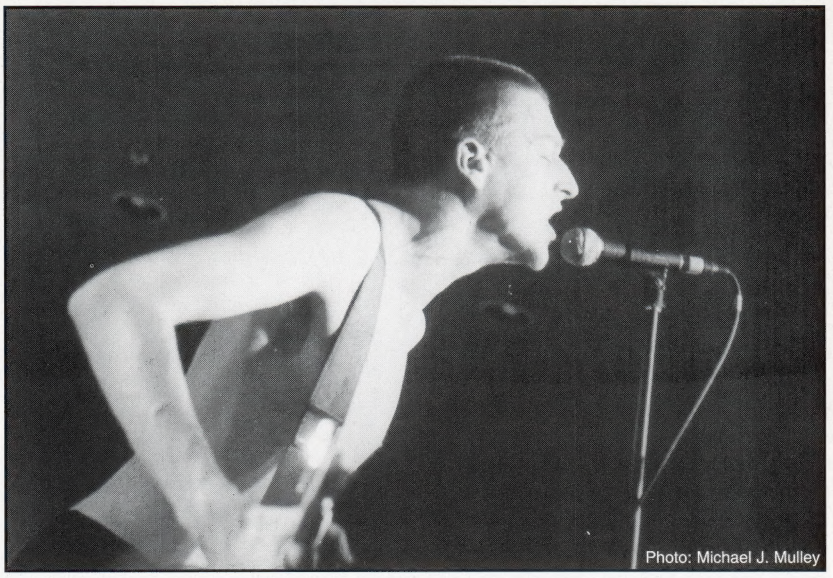
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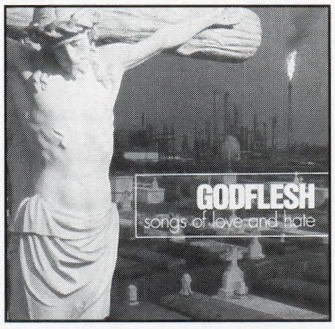
A lumbering juggernaut in an apocalyptic wasteland, **GODFLESH** remains so heavy it hurts. Formed by NAPALM DEATH guitarist Justin Broadrick (also the epicenter of HEAD OF DAVID and SUGARTOOTH), **GODFLESH** has jolted and grooved in the name of distortion for almost a decade. Broadrick drops into the Pit to breakdown *Songs of Love and Hate*, **GODFLESH**'s latest masochistic manifesto.

"More anger went into this record than the penultimate *Selfless*. Columbia dicked and dropped us. We knew Columbia couldn't sell us, but we took the whole ordeal quite personally and saw the whole artificial business for what it was. We didn't like that existence: the treatment, the commodities and the marketing. Apart from everyday things, *Songs of Love and Hate* is an angry album because the business isn't about music anymore. This record is borne out of frustration and isolation.

"Even in a crowd I feel isolated. I'm one of those people at odds with the general opinion of the mass, and I don't feel comfortable very easily. I have functionally isolated myself: I lived in the city, and now I live in the middle of nowhere near Whales 'cause I wanted to become isolated. I spent my whole life stuck near concrete and people, and I just wanted to escape.



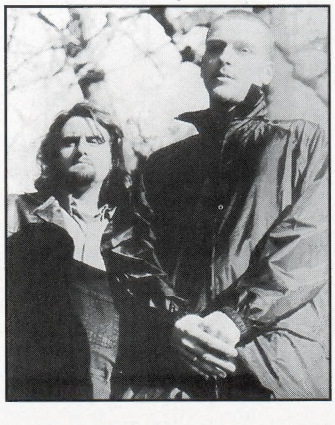
"I get nervous to a ridiculous degree. When I started making music I had a natural arrogance; these days I've got the drive, but I haven't got the confidence. I'll do a bit of alcohol to cut off the thought process, which isn't the way I like to operate in day-to-day existence. I live in a pot reality, though I don't smoke as much in the daytime anymore. I used to be one of those dudes who got out of bed and literally sparked up a spliff. I wouldn't do anything without having a smoke: I couldn't eat or even go to the bathroom. And I functioned that way for about eight years. Now, I actually do things like drink coffee. Still, as soon as it gets about seven in the evening I start smoking. If I'm doing anything creative in the studio, I always must have a smoke before I start work. It's an absolute integral part of my existence every day. When you're smoking, obviously, you think deeper about things. America needs Holland's attitude of toleration as opposed to legalization: the loop holes. I still can't believe in this day and age pot's not readily available.

"I only make music to create. And I lose rock music. That's why there's a real need for **GODFLESH**. Many have taken the influence for their own needs or mixed it with other stuff, but no one touches exactly what we do. **GODFLESH** fills the gap. We always felt that we were ahead of our time, anyway. When we made *Streetcleaner*, initially, people weren't ready for it. We released a record that opened up a lot of boundaries. I always feel we're ahead of the pack; we can survive because we make a futuristic sound anyway. And I look at our music as being more in touch with the future than current modern music, which is obsessed with the past. We exist through media-overload, trends and image-imitation because we're not a big band. We recognize the fact that we make music that will not sell a million copies. We're resigned to that fact, but not in a negative way, because we keep our heads above water and keep making music. We're making music for music's sake as opposed to any other goal. Most side projects I do now are involved in ambient music or groovy-funk-pop-techno. There's no other rock stuff I'm involved in anymore. SWEETTOOTH was dirty rockin' but shelved. I am in a project with a member of SWEETTOOTH called ICE that will come out through Reprise Warner Brothers. The album's really unusual.

"Many people assume the cover of *Songs of Love and Hate* is a computer image, but it's an appropriate and very real image of a petrol factory in New Orleans. The factory is the industry of a particular suburb. All the people work in the factory and basically die of cancer and end up buried next to the plant. A sick and ironic concept reflecting general society and the way people are treated.

"Next to the lyrics is a still of me covered in blood from the last video we made for the song 'Crush My Soul' from *Selfless*. MTV banned the video. We made the vid with a fatal New York artist, Andres Serrano. He did a photo called 'Piss Christ' which America banned. Jesse Helms ripped it up on television. For many years we were inspired by his stuff, and Columbia had a budget, so we got him for this really heavy video. One of the climatic stills from the video is me being covered in real cow's blood. We loved the shot so much that we used it for the inside. The video is on an Earache compilation video. We are aimed at a **GODFLESH** video compiling all our videos with new and old live footage. People seem to want **GODFLESH** stuff on video. The visual aspect is fairly important anyway, and we could stress that by having a commercial video."

Stone



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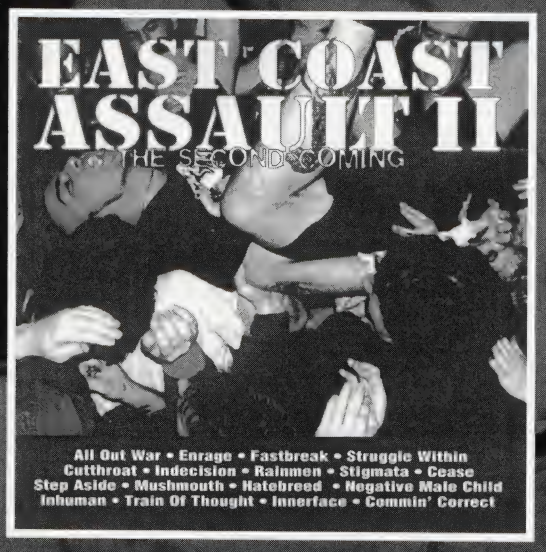
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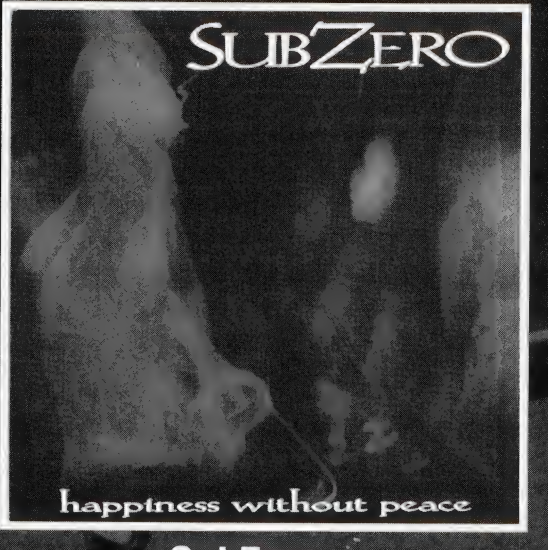

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ENDURA are soundscape alchemists combining synthesizers reminiscent off TANGERINE DREAM with (un)healthy doses of Aleister Crowley, H.P. Lovecraft and psychedelic drugs. Stephen Pennick and Christopher Walton began their journey into the realms of ambient electronics in '93. The next year saw the release of their first CD, *Dream of Dark Waters* on the German label Nature and Art.

ENDURA would remain silent until the summer of '96 and the unveiling of three simultaneous releases, *The Light is Dark Enough* on Allegoria, *Liber Leviathan* on Aesthetic Death, and *Black Eden* on America's chthonic Red Stream. Though each full length CD is unique, both in style and concept, there are similarities. Those more inclined to medieval devil worship and sabbat dancing will want to begin with *Black Eden*. Those partial to oceanic depths and what lurks beneath the waves should first swim within the dark waters of *Liber Leviathan*. *The Dark is LIght Enough* will await the converted follower on unholy ground.

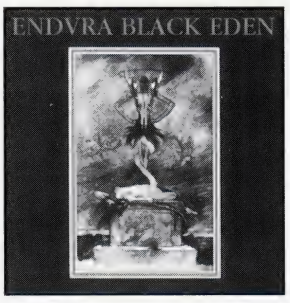
Pit: *How did you develop your dark ritual sound?*

Stephen: I would describe our music as quite dark in its origins, and I would like to think that it makes people think, but I certainly don't want us to be categorized as a satanic, extremist band—we are not. When we set up the band, our intentions were to create soundscapes to dark themes. Dark themes being 'death' and 'mysticism', not Satanism or any of the baggage which that label carries with it.

All of the mastering is done on headphones so we can get the most space out of the stereo imaging. Because of this, I think it works best if the listener is also using headphones. Let us inside your head, I'm sure you wont' feel the same afterwards. I think our recordings are getting better. Personally, I am learning more about the programming of voice architecture on the synths and the intricacies of the sequencer, more about panning techniques and compression.

We didn't choose to play dark ritual music, that is just the way it comes out. We play music which sounds good to us, if other people are impressed by it then I guess that's OK. We don't sit down and say "this is gonna be a really slow, miserable track", that's just the way they turn out. I think it's probably a reflection of our inner side. **ENDURA** is not just a dark-music set up; we work with loads of different styles and have crossed over many boundaries. I don't want **ENDURA** to be restricted to following the same listeners. When we play music, we play to please ourselves.

Chris: My dreams usually take place in an internal landscape that is a distortion of a river valley close to where I lived when I was younger; in these dreams I have swam in the river using a strange hybrid body, flew over the river like a swallow and watched monsters emerge from the river. Things that live in water fascinate and frighten me. I am particularly sensitive to the image of sharks and leviathans; a large submerged shape, either animate or inanimate, sets off very primal instincts. These are things I want to express in music and the 'dark ritual' genre is much more suitable. The basic idea behind a ritual is to provide an 'atmosphere' that is conducive to the facilitation of a result, this applies in every day life as much as in magic and music. Any ritual must produce an atmosphere that the participants can use like a psychic lens to sharpen and focus the will and ultimately to get the required job done. The music is a sigil allowing access to altered states. I do not think that every **ENDURA** song works in this way for everybody who listens to it, but for those who know the gate, maybe we provide a key.



I understand the word* ENDURA *comes from the world of the Cathars.

Chris: Anybody who reads about Catharism and the siege of Montsegur can not fail to be moved by what happened. The armies of the Pope destroyed one of the most vibrant and progressive cultures of the middle ages.

The word 'endura' is taken from the name of a Cathar ritual. The ritual involved fasting and meditation in the wilderness, just as Christ spent forty days in the wilderness and Jonah spent four days in the belly of Leviathan. The purpose of the ritual was to test the person, to harden him and strengthen him, mentally and physically, to ensure the candidate was ready to take the Consolamentum, the sacrament that initiated the Cathar to priesthood. **ENDURA** is a universal word and most western European languages, with Latin elements, have some close approximation. I would almost want people to know nothing about Catharism and come to their own conclusions based on their own experiences.

Some of your work seems greatly influenced by the fiction of H.P. Lovecraft.

Chris: Lovecraft, and the ideas that he used in his fiction, have been a very useful springboard for my own ideas, both musically and magickally. The way he created alternate realities and secondary worlds is a very useful lesson for the magician; few artists can really dip their fingers in the stuff of magick and myth and do it well—in literature Lovecraft was one of those few.

As a person, there can be little doubt that Lovecraft was a very limited and damaged individual. He seemed painfully aware of his tainted ancestry—the family history of madness and his fathers premature death through syphilis. The tainted blood, the hidden offspring, the fevered mind on the verge of insanity, this was the real legacy of the Lovecraft family. Lovecraft was a weak child, a loner and an outsider. He never really felt at home in the twentieth century and his work was a way of escaping the tedium of life. Lovecraft may not have been a masterful prose stylist but his work is visionary in the real sense, it creates an 'atmosphere'. I think the real power of Lovecraft is the constant evocation of weird atmospheres so successfully that stories with paper thin characters and hackneyed plots come alive through the sheer otherness of the description. This is what I hope **ENDURA** also achieve in our music: using atmosphere and ambiance to evoke a state of consciousness the listener would otherwise not find.

Although Lovecraft has left us some of the most outré and bizarre fiction ever written it seems almost in spite of his personality rather than because of it. For Lovecraft, the universe was vast and cold—the Laws of Man are not the Laws of the Universe. We see time and time again a puny, priggish humanity vainly struggling to make sense of the universe and keep out the terror that threatens to intrude from beyond! Unlike Crowley, who actively sought traffic with the denizens of the Void, Lovecraft was both appalled and terrified by what intruded onto his dreamtime. The only way he could rationalize it was to turn it into fiction and exorcise what he could not understand.

The use of the words and imagery of death in the *Necronomicon* mythos is very interesting but should not be taken to mean the mundane earthly death of a man. Perhaps it would be better to see the term 'death' as interchangeable with the words 'darkness' and 'alien'. I think we should view the Lovecraft Mythos as having a subjective reality inside the psycho-magickal microcosm of the Magician. In the Mauve Zone of nether-nether time, in the gaps between the star and the borderland, between reality and surreality the entities of inner and outer space can manifest in ways intelligible to our mundane minds; people like Howard Phillips Lovecraft took these experiences and used them in their art. We all carry the potential for our own *Necronomicon*.

Chad Hensely

When beauty collides with intellect, whether divine or arcane, the result is always good listening. Subtly sublime and hypnotically haunting, Susan Wallace and Tina Root, the darkwave duo behind **SWITCHBLADE SYMPHONY**, visit the Pit to brew a special kettle of their potent goth broth.

"*Serpentine Gallery* contains different phases of the band and what we were going through at the time. The CD features songs from two of our demos: *Fable* deals with magic and fairies; *Elegy* is angry, in-your-face and realistic. We went through definite stages of white anger or inspired realism. The topics are not what they seem to be, but mostly events occurring in the lives of me and Tina. Tina writes most of the lyrics now, whereas I wrote the earlier ones.

"I love children's stories and limerick. Sometimes I write purely for vowel sounds, and sometimes I write for lyrical content. Everything depends on what the music sounds like, and how I want to vocally sound. Sometimes I write solely for the rhythm of the vocal line. I use three influences to write the lyrics: rhythm, actual sounds or textures of my voice. Vocally, I'm influenced by what I'm feeling; I don't try to sound like anybody, although Mike Patton of FAITH NO MORE has a great voice. I also love opera and Nina Hagen."

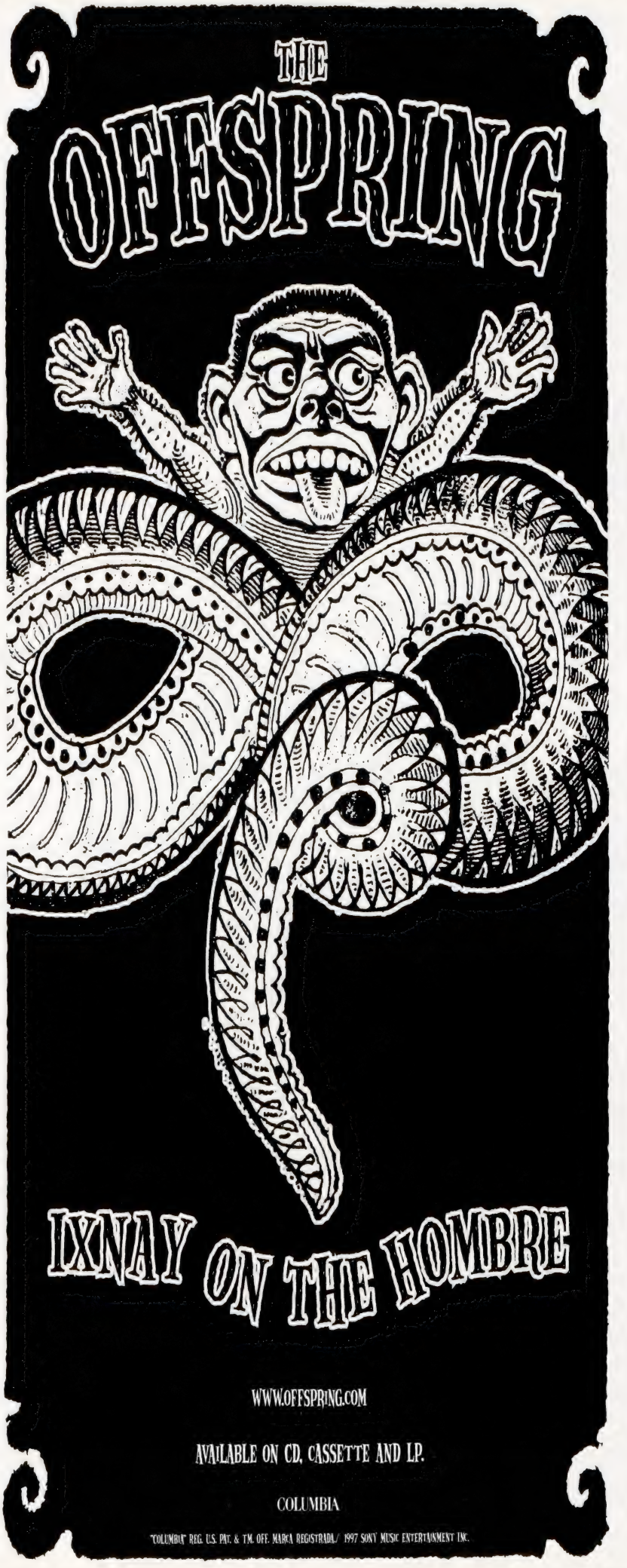
"Tina and I met about seven years ago over the phone. We connected right away: sisters from the very start. We took a while to get started: we played in my room at home, and I wore headphones because my family was going crazy. We played together for about two years. Then we went through some band mates, and things didn't work out. For some reason we never really clicked with anybody else. But the San Francisco scene is thriving. The local DJs, clubs and the radio really support local bands and get music out there so people can hear it; the people are very loyal and enthusiastic, and I'm glad that's where we are. We recorded a song live in a garage for the *From the Machine* compilation on Index Records. The song was very well received; we landed radio play and a good response from the pivotal club scene. We're on 11 compilations now. We put out the aforementioned demos and did showcases for Polygram and Interscope, but neither felt we were marketable enough. We didn't have any label support until we signed with Cleopatra. Last year we toured with CHRISTIAN DEATH and got out and saw the rest of the country: the landscape and the architecture was inspiring. I've dreamt about traveling and playing since I was little. The trek was the coolest thing I've ever done, just like heaven, and I'll never be the same. Many people totally affected us and gave us strength.

"When we play live sets we consider an overall sound which we don't consider for the CD. The whole set is determined by one song, and each set needs to have intrinsic dynamics just as the songs need to have dynamics within each song. When we arrange the set, we overlook the set as one and consider the different dynamics of every song. Album wise, each song is one entity not written to complement the other songs."

Two baroque Barbies weaving a web of euphonious ennui, **SWITCHBLADE SYMPHONY** further inflicts a transfixing trauma in the form of a remix release this spring. This love leads to madness.

Stone

CLEOPATRA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How is success measured? By the great bands and legendary musicians a person has played with, by albums that set the standards for the 20th century, or by being the spokesman for several generations through lyrics that could never be duplicated? If those are some ways to measure, then there are still thousands of miles to go on this man's career, for the above mentioned are just the tip of the iceberg.

Ronnie James Dio has lived, performed and endured the heavy music scene through the best and worst of times. Starting his career with such groups as RONNIE DIO AND THE PROPHETS and ELF, he later landed in such established acts as Ritchie Blackmore's RAINBOW and BLACK SABBATH. Then, eventually, he created his own DIO. In each of those groups Dio put out some albums that stand out as pure masterpieces, such as *Heaven and Hell*, *Long Live Rock n Roll*, and *Holy Diver*. Now in '96 he returns with a vibrant, modern record, entitled *Angry Machines* that he feels happy and proud of. The fine musicians that serve as his soldiers in the pursuit of "the heaviest band in the world" are: Tracy G. on guitars, Larry "Bonz" Dunce (replacing Jeff Pilson) on bass, and Vinnie Appice on drums.

Note: Dio is currently working on a book about his life, travels and people he has worked with over the years, be on the lookout for it.

Pit: *Tell us about the tour and the response to* Angry Machines.

Ronnie James Dio: We started this tour in November in Ventura, California; it was easier for us to work our way into the snow and cold. In December we were in Germany for three weeks, then we flew back and started this all again in January in San Francisco. The album, *Angry Machines*, has been out since October, and I'm real pleased to say that the response has been great! People have said how much more modern it is, and that is what we tried to accomplish. It took us about eight or nine months to write—one off the reasons being Jeff Pilson was busy working on his DOKKEN project. [Larry "Bonz" Dunce replaced Jeff Pilson after the recording of *Angry Machines*.] We couldn't wait any longer, so Tracy, Vinnie and I wrote about half of it and did some touring in South America. It took us a lot longer than it normally does to write and record, but the acceptance has been great.

Rather than losing any edges, you seem to have created some new ones. What was your mindset when creating* Angry Machines*?

Anyone who hasn't heard my last two album—*Strange Highways* with **DIO**, and before that *Dehumanizer* with SABBATH—will probably be a bit surprised by the contents of the lyrics. I'm pretty known for wizards, witches, dragons and dreams, etc., and when we did *Dehumanizer* I really felt that it was time to change that—to get away from being an escapist and get into what the world has to offer. The real world is a pretty awful place, so when you write that way you get pretty aggressive. This album was even more that way. I wanted to take it another step, and we did that.

After all the years you've been involved in the music industry, how do you feel about the changes you've seen in radio, video and life in general?

What drives me is the love for this kind of music. Sometimes you paint yourself into corners—you do one type of music and you get known for that. Any time you try to depart from it people will say you've changed; well, I haven't changed. I have always only wanted to be the heaviest singer in the world, in the heaviest band in the world. That's the kind of attitude I've always had; I never want anybody to say, "Boy, that was wimpy." If they did, I'd just fall apart. And that is what the people in this band feel like. When I got the chance to be in SABBATH it was like a dream come true. You can't get any heavier than that—you can't get any darker, more powerful than being in a band like that. Except for creating DIO, being in SABBATH was the highlight for me. I thought it was going to last forever.

We're going through a time, now, where it's real hard for rock music. Radio stations and labels are jumping on the bandwagon, whether it be rap or alternative. To me it's always just been metal or rock. I've always stayed true to that, and I have suffered for it sometimes. But, I'm proud to do that one thing! I've always felt that you can take this type of music, even though it's pretty traditional, and move it forward. It doesn't have to be the same kind of music year after year. I think it's good if there is a little bit of a lull in the music that's being made in the hard rock / heavy metal vein, because that means that the bands that come along later are going to be better.

If you weren't doing this, what do you think would have been in the cards for you?

Well, I've never been a working kind of guy, although, I've got a strong work attitude because of my folks. Working hard is important; however, I think I always would have been a musician. I've loved music all my life; I started playing trumpet when I was five years old. I would have probably been involved in a band one way or another. I just always wanted to be me and be happy doing what I want to do.

Here's my favorite philosophical question for you. If you were to be included in a time capsule to be buried and opened in the future, what would you like to have said about you.

I would choose the one song that reflects how I feel and how I've tried to deal with life. It is a line from "Heaven and Hell"—"The world is full of kings and queens, Who blind your eyes and steal your dreams, It's heaven and hell!" That is what this world is—it's heaven and it's hell. I always wanted to make people aware that these king and queens have no talent, except the talent to put their hand in your chest and rip your heart out leaving you there in a heap of nothingness. I think that once people are aware that there are people like that, and they avoid them, then their lives will be better.

Mike Trujillo

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WICKED INNOCENCE "Omnipotence" available on Compact Disc for $13 (USA) $14 (World). Send your order to the address above and receive our huge mailorder catalog.

Death metal is meant to send normal people screaming from the room. Unlike some bands who opted for technical proficiency, **MORTICIAN** de-evolved this basic concept to create the sickest, most warped, dehumanizing metal imaginable. Their 24-track *Hacked up for Barbacue* runs like Pennsylvania congressman Bud Dwyer's wounds after he committed suicide with a .357 on television. Each track surges like Dwyer's nasal blood spicket; relentlessly streaming forth in nerve snapping horror. Vocalist/bassist Will Rahmer has segregated **MORTICIAN** to this level of mind numbing metal chaos for nearly a decade now. In his mind, tuning down and speeding up are the foundation in their house of horror. "We're more hyped to playing upbeat material. There won't be 'Necrocannibal' type songs anymore. It's boring playing stuff like that live," he said, in his low, gruff voice. "We like getting the adrenaline flowing by going faster and faster. Our biggest influences for playing fast are from old hardcore like DISCHARGE and EXTREME NOISE TERROR."

Since their original drummer, Matt Sicher, accidentally drowned in '92 while under the influence, the loss procured Rahmer adopting a drum machine, which he said will be used until they find the right replacement. Until then, Rahmer recently recruited drummer Vic Novak, from Cleveland, Ohio's FUNERAL PYRE and guitarist Brian Sekula for touring purposes. He described Novak as faster than the legendary Sicher, but he is only in the trial stage of joining the band permanently. Second guitarist Desmond Tolhurst was added as well, a Berkeley School of Music graduate and experienced sound engineer. He recorded *Hacked Up For Barbacue* using an Alesis ADAT, much like QUEENSRYCHE did for *Promise Land*. All future recordings will have equally clear production, he said, and no royalty money is required to record as **MORTICIAN** does it all themselves.

Currently, Rahmer and crew are focusing their energies on writing, recording and more touring to make up for time lost since '90. "We're trying to get the scene going again towards brutal deathgrind, like in the old days—like old TERRORIZER," he said. They have six new songs written, but no titles; they also plan on recording SLAUGHTER's "Fuck of Death" on seven inch soon. A west coast tour in May with MORPHEUS DESCENDS may happen, and he said he wants to put out "at least one release every year" from now on.

One hugely noticeable improvement is their drum production, which suffered horribly on past recordings. "We programmed the drum machine a little too fast on *House by the Cemetary*. We always want maximum speed," he chuckled. "We slowed it down a little so when we play live it won't be impossible to do. It's something like 260 BPM on *House*. On *Hacked Up*, we dropped it to 220 BPM. It sounds a little more realistic." He said Desmond is available to record and produce for any up-and-coming bands, for a reasonable fee.

MORTICIAN also embarked on a Texas tour with INCANTATION and ANAL CUNT in '96, which went "extremely well." Many people were intimidated by Rahmer's reputation for "being a crazy motherfucker" and some wouldn't stand closer than a few feet away when talking to him. "I'm more than happy to talk to everybody. I actually signed some of our original seven inches and *Brutally Mutilated* demos that we sold seven years ago for people who brought them to the shows. It was great to see those people from the old days are still into it. In cities like Laredo, Texas, most of those people didn't even know who we were, but we sold a lot of merchandise afterwards. We hung out and partied with a bunch of bikers down there. That's why I can't understand why bands like MORBID ANGEL have to have a fucking attitude. That's how you lose fans," he affirmed. "I

give credit to anybody who plays in a band, because its a hard way to make a living. If I don't like somebody's music, I'm not going to go off on them like some of these dicks do in magazines. Those assholes like to hide behind the press. If you have something to say to us, say it to our fucking faces. I seriously doubt what they say in print, they will say to my face."

Having met Rahmer personally, I can vouch to his claim. It is no secret that he has caused more than a few persons teeth to be swallowed after his fist sent them racing past their tonsils. One such incident that occurred shortly after their *House by the Cemetary*'s release had everyone involved worried and tense. Rahmer had attended a party of younger punks when an older, local man, who Rahmer described as "a 45 year old drug addict, alcoholic faggot", wandered in to join them. He said he noticed it was odd the older man showed intense interest in the young males during the party. Ultimately, the man made a sexual gesture to Rahmer regarding his leather garb. Rahmer described his reaction as "kicking him full-bore in the face," which sent several teeth flying and broke a number of his ribs; he then kicked him down a flight of stairs. A Yonkers police patrol found the victim wandering the streets soaked in his own blood. According to Rahmer, they "thought he got jumped by ten people. I knew one of the cops who found him, and when he saw me, he said, 'Man, you fucked him up.' [The victim] is one of the town fuck-ups. He had a gay lover that died in his apartment from an alcohol overdose. He's been in trouble with the cops for a long fucking time. The whole thing was really fucked up."

Luckily, because of his clean record, Rahmer did no jail time. "The blacks outnumber the whites about five to one in the Staten Island Penitentiary. Believe me, jail sucks. It's nowhere anyone would want to be."

Kurt Hubert

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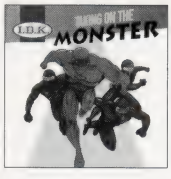

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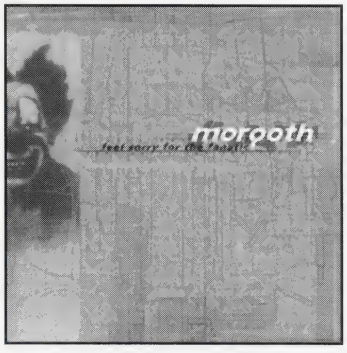
morgoth

A bold leap forward, or a quick-buck sellout? That seems to be the question asked of the startling new **MORGOTH** record, *Feel Sorry For the Fanatic*, released several months ago to alternately glowing and scathing reviews. Once known for their DEATH-inspired bursts of primitive old-school death metal, **MORGOTH** turned in the well-written *Cursed* in '91 and the slightly-progressive *Odium* in '93 before seemingly falling off the face of the earth. While guitarist Carsten Otterbach started a management company and vocalist Marc Grewe started working for Century Media in promotions, while singing for both COMECON (on their disappointing *Fable Frolic* LP) and POWER OF EXPRESSION, the other guys got busy taking lessons and improving themselves during their breather from **MORGOTH**.



"We've all been friends for fifteen years, in bands before **MORGOTH**," Grewe reveals. "On the tour for *Odium* we had to share a bus with two other bands in the dead of winter. After this experience, we didn't want to see each other for a while. In that situation, everyone does stupid little things which piss off everyone else. I did COMECON and POWER OF EXPRESSION; Harry (Busse, guitar) and Rudiger (Hennecke, drums) got into programming. It wasn't a waste of time, it was a creative break. We got back together to play a Mexican tour in November of '94 and we were ready to write new material."

What they came up with, as shown on *Feel Sorry for the Fanatic*, cannot be called 'death metal' by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, their sound now more closely resembles bands like KILLING JOKE than anything from the heavy end of the spectrum. Melodic, less riff-oriented, rife with keyboards and samples, clean vocals and bleak, harmonic dynamic, *Feel Sorry for the Fanatic* is one of the biggest targets in recent memory for the slings and arrows of change-hatin' critics and fans. "With *Odium*, we were already trying to get away from typical death metal," Grewe counters. "Some people say the new record sounds like a different band—my voice, the keyboards, the samplers—but if you know *Odium*, it's the same band." *Odium* would have been even more progressive than it was, Grewe explains, but he says the band was "rushed" during the recording.

So, I wonder, how does a song like "Watching the Fortune Wheel"—a slow, moody, heavy song with 80's prog-alternative written all over it—stand up live with, say, "Female Infanticide" or "Isolated"? "We play the old stuff in a more modern sound," Grewe explains. "It's still extremely heavy, but with a new touch. We don't deny our roots," he says, with the air of someone who's already had to explain this a hundred times. "We didn't want to be stuck on the sound of one album. We're not the kind of band to play it safe for the sake of album sales. We're not just covering our own past." When I bring up the KILLING JOKE similarities, Grewe admits that they could be influential, not so much on him as on Rudiger and Harry. "I was always more into JOY DIVISION, BAUHUAUS and early CURE, even when we were starting out, in addition to all the death metal I liked."

Before *Odium* came out, there was talk of an unhappy **MORGOTH** leaving Century Media to sign with a major label. "We did have a few major offers, only in Europe," Grewe reveals. "But, Century Media wanted a lot of money to sell us to them. This is not an option for the future because they gave us better conditions in our contract since then, and Century Media is booming in Europe right now—they are the biggest label that is still underground in Europe. Roadrunner is like a major label there now."

While we're dredging up history, I ask Grewe about **MORGOTH**'s touring in the U.S., which—until now—has consisted of an early trek supporting KREATOR and BIOHAZARD, and a canceled string of dates with CANCER when *Odium* came out. "At that time, in Germany, there was a problem with skinheads burning peoples' homes, and it got a lot of foreign media coverage. Two days before we were supposed to leave [for that tour], our working permits were denied. They don't have to give you a reason for that, but I think it had something to do with [the actions of] those fascist assholes. I am glad people were paying attention to that, but it seems unfair to [suspect] a whole nation because of a few assholes."

As our conversation draws to a close, Grewe comes back to the point of **MORGOTH**'s new sound—"our philosophy is to experiment. We don't want to kiss the fans' asses. We have to be true to ourselves." And in a musical scene where the slightest change is decried as blasphemy, progression is seen as vulnerability and every two-bit loudmouth (myself included) seems to have a pulpit from which to slander at will, what other course of action is there? You'd have to feel sorry for any fanatic closed-minded enough to miss out on a record this good.

Keith Bergman

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If you've seen **STUCK MOJO** live, you can attest to the fact that they're one of the more potent bands in the underground right now, but if all you've heard of them was their 1994 debut, *Snappin' Necks*, you'd be understandably confused as to what the hype was all about. It's competent, well-played, and about as aggressive and exciting as a soggy piece of white toast—the force and fury of a **MOJO** show emasculated by a 'big' producer and reduced to the unappealing tag of 'rap-metal', monotonous guitar tones killing off the band's energy faster than you can say ANTHRAX.

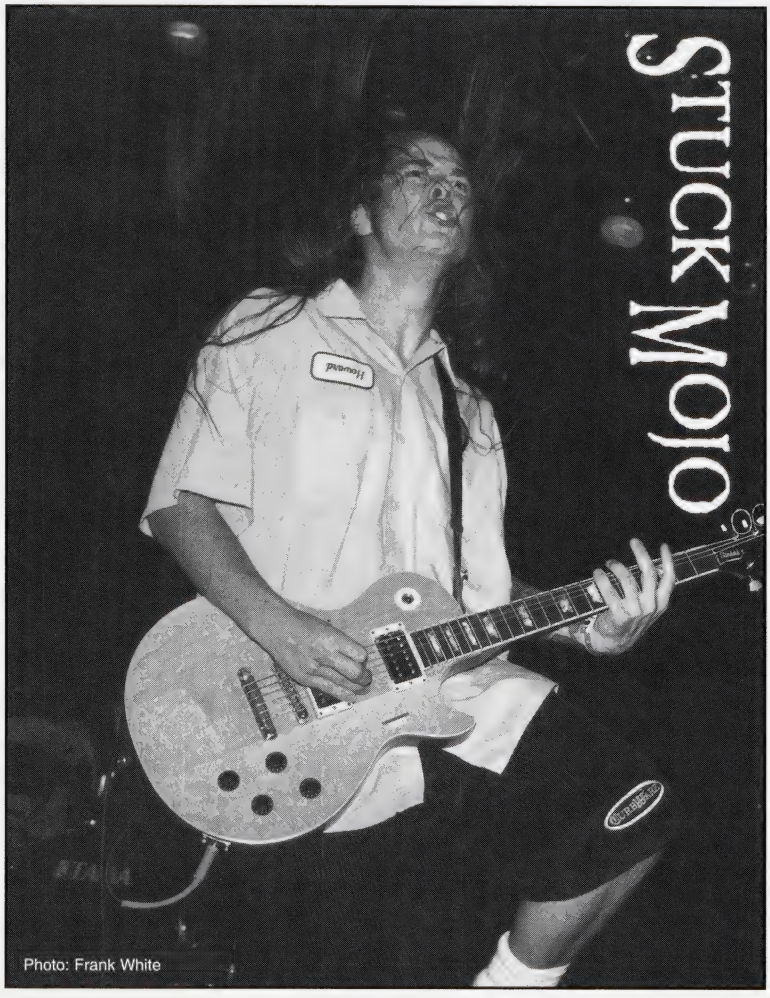


Photo: Frank White

"This guy [Josef Nuyens] had recorded bands like PHISH and JASON AND THE SCORCHERS—we were naive, we trusted him," Ward recalls. "But if you don't understand the aggression and the vibe, how are you gonna capture it? There's only so many times you can see a review that says 'these guys are a lot better live' before you start thinking something's wrong."

Ward's frustration turned to revelaton after hearing the last MESHUGGAH record, *Destroy Erase Improve* (Nuclear Blast). "That record was so fucking heavy! I listened to it and I felt like I was in a fight! That's how a heavy record should make you feel. So I knew I wanted [MESHUGGAH producer] Daniel Bergstrand." A phone call to the rising producer's home revealed that he had, in fact, already heard of **STUCK MOJO**. "He said he had the first record, and he thought our songs were good but that it sounded like shit!" Ward laughs. Bergstrand agreed to come over to Atlanta on his vacation time to record *Pigwalk*, their sophomore album, if the band would fly his girlfriend over as well. The first half of the team was in place.

The other half was none other than Devin Townsend, the demented mastermind behind STRAPPING YOUNG LAD who has collaborated with everyone from Jason Newsted to Steve Vai to Geezer Butler. "I've known Devin for a while, and I asked him as a friend to give me some pointers in the studio—just come down, hang out for a while, eat some Waffle House, and put his two cents in. But, man," he concludes with a laugh. "He produced the hell out of it!"

I ask Ward his opinion on the producer's role. "Look at a guy like Terry Date," he replies. "All the bands he's produced, he's left his mark on them. I think a producer should almost be like a fifth member of the band. Devin would suggest stuff to us, like distorting the drum track on 'Inside My Head'. And Daniel—Swedes are a lot slower, and more methodical. He'd just sit there for hours, getting these perfect guitar and drum sounds, no breaks. That guy can make chicken salad outta chicken shit, I tell ya!"

Talking about their producers indirectly exposes Ward's competitive streak. "Daniel and Devin are both great guys, but they're not big names. Dan's 23—I wanted someone who's like our band, who young, and has somethin' to prove to guys like Colin Richardson. That's how we are, we're competitive with other bands, we wanna go beyond the standards other people have set."

Pigwalk blows the first record away, plain and simple, with much better songwriting, further experimentation by 'lyrical expressionist' Bonz (avoiding the rap cliches he sometimes fell into on *Snappin' Necks*), and of course the visceral blast of vastly improved sound. Put all thoughts of traditional (and lame) rap-metal out of your head, **STUCK MOJO** are on another level. Part of the credit for this must be given to the band's new and improved rhythm section, Bud Fontsere (drums) and Corey Lowery (bass). But what happened to ex-drummer Brent Payne and ex-bassist Dwayne Fowler? When I last saw the band, it seemed that their biggest strength was in being a tight, family-like unit, four guys against the world.

"It used to be like that," Ward sighs. "But after we got the record deal, we were pretty much living in the van, constantly on tour. Brent became really destructive, breaking up dressing rooms, getting in a lot of fights. We got tired of the macho bullshit—I'm in this for the vibe between the crowd and us. I mean, I box, but not so I can go pound a guy in a bar, but so I can be fit on stage. The whole caveman philosophy just wasn't working. He's still looking for another band, in fact. With Dwayne, he had a wife and two kids, and he missed them. He was more into funk and reggae, and I was just into being HEAVY. We'd both go to Bonz seperately and we'd say, 'I can't work with this guy any more!' Finally Bonz told us both to shut up, sit down and figure out what we were gonna do. It was affecting our friendship, and the state of the band, to the point where I had a side project going with the ex-bassist of SAIGON KICK and we were getting offers."

Photo: Frank White

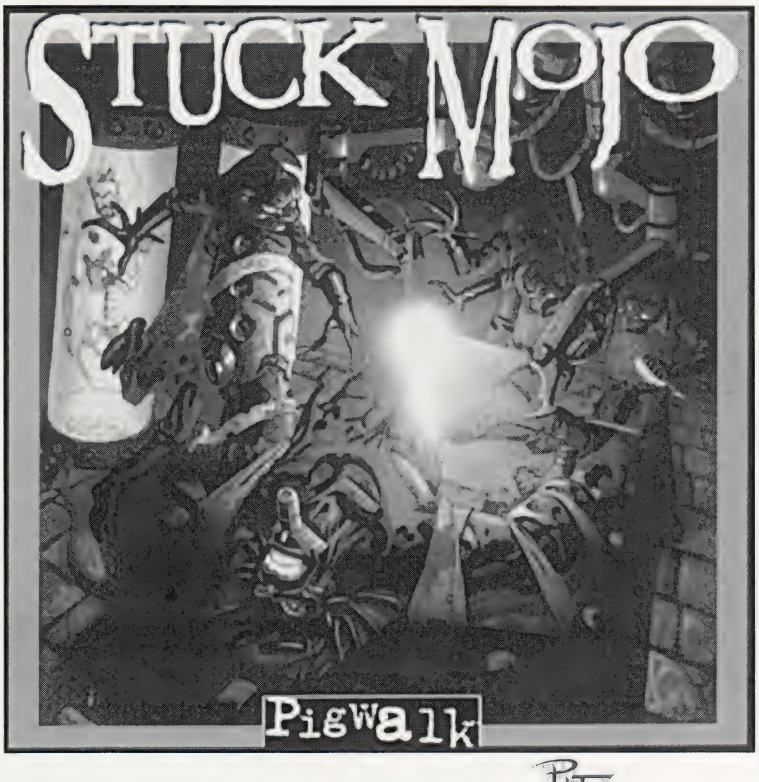
Happily, Lowery and Fontsere came along and got the band back to their old equilibrium. "Now we're all having fun again," Ward explains. "We can get in the van, crank up some MAIDEN, have a blast, and go play a killer show. I mean, what's the point of playing if you're just gonna be four guys staring at your shoes, playing through amps the size of my stereo speakers? Bonz is out there jumping off the monitors, I'm smashing the drums with my guitar, we're totally going off. People paid money to come see us, they had a shitty day or whatever, it's my job to be up there getting completely into it."

Ward has a larger goal in mind than simply spreading the gospel of **STUCK MOJO**'s hybrid sonic mayhem. "I wanna revive heavy music, or fucking die trying!" he states. "I mean, you see these bands who we all loved ten years ago, denying their past—I'll never be ashamed to admit that *Shout at the Devil* was cool at the time! I saw TWISTED SISTER in '84, opening for MAIDEN—that shit was great! We played in New York and Bruce Dickinson came on stage with us and sang a song. Afterwards I was listening to his new shit, and I told him 'dude, let me write an album for you. We'll bring it back, man.' I don't think he took me seriously. I mean, you see George Lynch on MTV saying how he didn't really like doing what DOKKEN

did in the Eighties. Dude, the guy is amazing! He's a legend! How can he just deny that?"

Ward is equally vociferous about his experiences being in a racially mixed band, "niggers and rednecks", as a sample on *Pigwalk* spits. "I've got hair down to my ass and tattoos head to foot. So, I work ten times harder to be polite and cool to people to dispel the stereotypes people have about people like me. I've seen Bonz get all sorts of shit at work, but instead of bitching about it, he just works ten times harder to prove his worth. I see us as ambassadors—I mean, if you're a racist, and you see Bonz hanging out with white people with no problem, that's gotta make you think about it. We've had club owners out in the sticks freak out the first time we come in—'I didn't hire no rap band!' But we work our asses off, they make money, and the next time we show up this same guy's sayin', 'hey Bonz, what's up?' That's why we arent writing any songs about racism and shit. It's not an issue to me and Bonz. We write our own damn ticket."

Keith Bergman



CENTURY MEDIA RECORDS

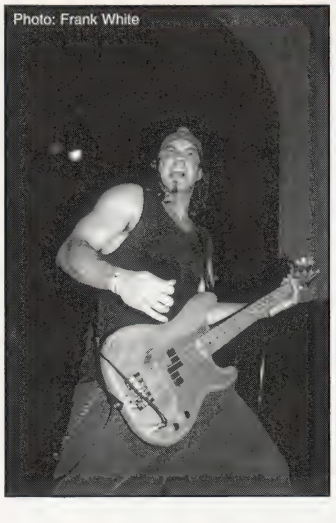


Photo: Frank White

Imagine a black metal band existing with the atmosphere of EMPEROR and the jackhammer speed and THC tolerance of BRUTAL TRUTH. Sweden's **TSATTHOGGUA**, like many of their Osmose Productions counterparts, exist as this bizarre and extreme case. Their debut album, *Hosanna Bizarre*, is an explosion of full-blown speed-demon-quality metal plagued with screeching keyboards and snarling vocals.

Their unique name was taken "from a powerful god in the ancient Sumerian culture. The spelling is strange, but this is the pronunciation used by scientists," guitarist Nar Marratuk explained. "He is much older than any known god like Jehovah, Osiris or Odin. He was described as a very big creature with wings and different body parts of different animals. Like a gigantic chimera."

Originally forming in '89 as DISSECTION, the German quartet played over 25 shows until early '93 with bands like SINISTER, FURBOWL and THERION. "Before '88, there were so many cult bands from our area; metal practically became a religion in those days. Many fans of DARKNESS, SODOM or KREATOR formed bands themselves. We as DISSECTION were one of them," Marratuk said. Over in Sweden, the widely known DISSECTION beat them all to the draw with their No Fashion Records debut, *The Somberlain*, which was the deciding factor to change to TSATTHOGGUA. "It was a newer and better name for us anyway," he said. Unfortunately, since this happened the band has performed few live gigs. "In May of '96, we only played one big festival with fifteen black and death metal bands from all over Europe. It is difficult arranging gigs, now, if you don't have a booking agency. We have one for Europe, but we did not have enough time to do a tour with 20 or more dates. They won't arrange single one-night gigs, either. In April '97 we hope to join a cool package tour in Europe."

Their live stage performance is equally as intense as their music, in which their vocalist, Northwind, intertwines S&M sexuality, power and offensive actions against the audience. Their use of leather and rubber masks "produces an ecstatic and orgasmic feeling in our music. The relation of metal and sexuality is very important for **TSATTHOGGUA**. Sex is an immortal experience in the life of humans and every orgasm is love and magic—a synthesis of dying and being reborn. It is much more than just fucking." Marratuk said by wearing such devices, the band evokes a dual personality and "sinks into a bizarre world of noise, chaos and terror onstage. It's just sheer action, hate and despise. Northwind, our vocalist, is a possessed person. He becomes totally insane and offensive while singing live. In personal life, he used to be a real lunatic, which means he got in lots of trouble with the police. He has become much cooler now. We play so fucking fast we usually have problems onstage, like knocking equipment over or smashing into each other. We play incredibly fast and intense because heavy metal means speed, action and rebellion to us. It has always been our aim to get faster and more precise in our playing. We would rather have a little chaos than decrease our speed. At one gig, we covered ourselves in pigs blood. That gig really upset some people," he continued. "We wanted to repeat that at a big open air festival near Berlin. We brought a bathtub filled with this stinky, greasy liquid and Northwind planned to jump in it during the gig, but the owner banned this. He threatened to cancel our gig if we did and confiscated our bloodcans and dumped them out. The gig was crap," he complained. "At our best local youth centre, where we have played several times, they won't let us play any longer. I think they are Christian people who dislike our attitude towards their 'saviour'. At our last gig there Northwind tore up some Bibles. They weren't pleased the words of Christ got ripped to shreds."

He said even though **TSATTHOGGUA** may attract more black metal fans, the band wants all extreme metal people to enjoy their music. But, "please, all Christian wimps, stay the fuck away," Marratuk warned. In addition, **TSATTHOGGUA** doesn't practice the Satanic isolationism many European black metal bands practice. "We are not part of this European black metal 'scene' where everybody pretends to be as depressive, thoughtful and evil as possible. We are a part of the western civilization and all its positive an negative aspects," he growled. "We want to lead fulfilled lives and have fun as long as we are young. I'm sure our interests in alcohol, drugs, sex, occultism, money and action are shared with most metal fans worldwide."

One thing is certain in regards to shared interests. When it comes to full-blown hellish speed, fans of black, death, grind and punk music can definitely appreciate **TSATTHOGGUA**. Nar Marratuk stated their next album, *To the Credo of Inversion*, will be recorded in mid '97 in Berlin and have songs titled "Angel of the Universe", "Countergod" and "Northernlight". In the meantime, they will continue writing new material, practice for touring, play together on their soccer team, work their jobs at a coal mine and indulge in their favorite hobby. "Next to hyper-speeding, the four of us love smoking delicious green [marijuana] from Holland. It's excellent inspiration!"

Kurt Hubert

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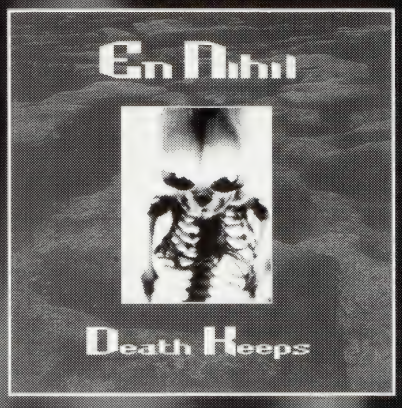

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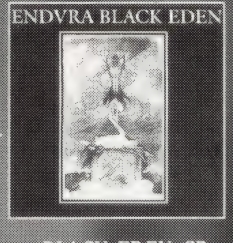

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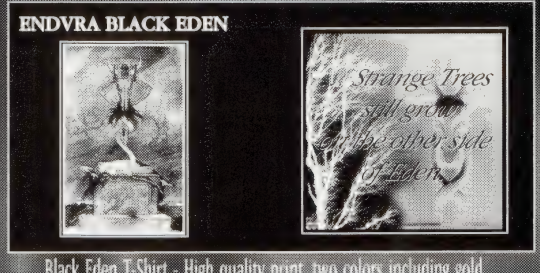

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Just a couple weeks following the departure of vocalist Sven Olafson, guitarist Jose Griffin gives us a call from England to talk about the second album, *Caress The Grotesque*, line-up problems and everything else GOMORRAH.

Pit: ***What's new with the band?***

Jose Griffin: We've endured our first line-up problem since the band has begun. Sven, the singer, just left as we were to embark on a UK tour. We saw it coming and it's been completely amicable. We've been auditioning and the response has been overwhelming. The UK tour has been re-scheduled for February. or March and the European continent following that.

How do you think a new singer will affect the overall sound?

It's hard to say, because, obviously, we haven't 100% settled on one person. It's kinda scary for us; we've been together five or six years, and as far as we were concerned Sven *was* the **GOMORRAH** sound. Especially on this new album, he worked so hard. We really felt we were going forward with him.

Are you looking forward to having new blood in the band?

To a certain extent, yes. It's an added injection of something new. It's going to be good for the band. The new guy is going to be emulating Sven, to an extent, because we've just released a new album. So, there won't be too much input other than the live personality. It'll be interesting for the third album to see what comes up.

Describe your musical progression from your first album.

I think the bottom line is, we're much more open minded to things. It's not as narrow minded as the last one. We've grown and matured like most bands do. We've worked harder on things; in particular, the words.

A lot of bands prefer using analog rather than digital in the studio; why did* GOMORRAH *choose this method?

The first one just sounded too polished; analog sounds more live. I'm not an expert on the technicality, but, to me, it does sound better. I think we expected something magical to come along with the digital, and it didn't happen.

How did the first album do?

It did all right, considering we had a lot of problems. It was originally released in England through a dance label who was trying to do a metal thing, and they really didn't know what they were doing. When we left them and went to Black Mark it was a year later. By that time it was a second hand album. Black Mark had an uphill task with it since it was already serviced to magazines and radio. But, all things considered, we are very happy with how it did.

How's the bands relationship with Black Mark?

We're pretty happy. It's still kinda early; the first one was on license, so we give credit to them for taking it on. This album is the first one that we're signed to them. They have promoted this one better, without a shadow of doubt. We have to see how things go along, but, so far, so good.

What are your expectations for North America?

It's harder these days because metal is not really in vogue. England seems to be suffering as well. It's so hard to crack the States; you have to spend a lot of time touring. That's where we benefited from Milwaukee.

Your first two demos sold a combined 2000 copies, what methods did you use to make them so successful?

We just really pushed our staff; we were a new band and obviously unknown. We received a lot of good press at the time, which helped a great deal. We were also part of the Underground Titans tour, which was five unsigned bands.

Any final comments to the readers of* Pit*?

Obviously were looking to come over, if not this summer then certainly the next one. We hope to incorporate Milwaukee and maybe a few weeks on the road—see some more of those towns that we didn't get to last time. Check out the record, I'm sure there's something on there for everybody.

Dallas Elmhurst

BLACK MARK

By now, everyone should be familiar with black metal. The style, the image, and the controversy have been well documented by the media the last couple of years. Of course, the most popular horror stories come from Norway, the black metal capital of the world. And along came **HELHIEM**, a Norwegian band striving to break metal fans' misconceptions of a highly talented a unique form of music, right from the heart of the beast. But, alas, not even this fresh young trio of musicians can escape controversy.

Coming from the city that spawned Head Not Found Records, and supports a growing scene full of young talent, **HELHIEM** have created a brand new style of black metal. Much like SAMAEL, **HELHIEM** uses techno-industrial influences in their music, yet keep the brutality that is slowly fading from SAMAEL's music. Band spokesman, Zorn, likes to set **HELHIEM** apart from other black metal bands. "I think we would prefer to stay alone, to stand on our own feet. I don't see **HELHEIM** as part of a certain scene, as we are more of a crossover band. So yeah, I think I prefer more of a 'lone wolf' term for us. (The music) has influences from many different genres. But, I would say that we are a crossover band, because we have elements from industrial music, even classical music and, of course, black metal."

If you are familiar with the **HELHIEM** demos, Zorn begs you to disregard them, "I would say that the demos are too bad! I don't like them at all anymore. They are poor sound quality, you know; they are shitty. Compared to the new stuff, they're no good at all. We had poor equipment; we didn't even have a proper studio." However, the band's debut mini-CD for Necropolis Records, *Fenris*, successfully showcases their unique music.

Zorn feels that bands that create their own sound are the ones who will succeed. He shared the secret of how **HELHIEM**'s sound was created. "Seth and I do most of the musical work, and we have very different musical influences and backgrounds. While I listen a lot to metal—I am the 'metal' guy in the band—Seth is more industrial and techno oriented. But, we've always wanted our own sound, our own style. Being original, of course, is very important to us. I don't see any point in creating music if we're just going to copy other people. It seems most bands today just try to do EMPEROR, or BURZUM. But, they can't do that, because BURZUM and EMPEROR are much better bands. They'd be better off trying to create an original style."

Zorn wanted to make clear that they try to keep their noses out of the all controversy surrounding other Norwegian bands. Unfortunately, **HELHIEM** have found their way into a bit of controversy. It seems that some people have mistaken the lyrics for being nationalistically motivated, and the album has been banned in Germany and Holland. Zorn doesn't agree with the band's critics, saying that the problem stems from some old flyers and some early interviews, "I don't think that it was the lyrics, as they have to do with Norse mythology and they weren't printed on the CD. They are also hard to hear. On our future work, the lyrics will be in English, so they will be available to more people. And about the nationalistic subject, I would not say that we're a nationalist band. But, I definitely think that our music must have sublime political militarism, which most people think is nationalism. We try to create a militant feel to the music, and the lyrics are just part of creating that atmosphere. I don't want them to be straight forward lyrics in the traditional sense, which you can make some sort of logical meaning out of. I look for the abstract or mind altering slogan-sort of lyrics. Know what I mean?"

He stated that they have yet to experience too many problems, as their exposure in their native country has been limited. He did mention that they expect more controversy once the album sees more distributio, and Necropolis releases their first full length. "I think the new one will be more controversial because people will have a chance to read the lyrics. I don't care if people think that what we do is controversial. I don't care about it because that is not what we are trying to do. We're just doing what we feel is right. I don't think we could do it any other way."

Zorn is also involved with another young band known as TYR, which he says is more death metal influenced. Their debut will be released as joint effort between Necropolis and thier local label, Head Not Found. "It is more like experimental death metal, I think. It's going to be very strange music. Death metal is the closest description, but it doesn't have anything to do with ENTOMBED, or crap like that. It's not very chaotic, but very brutal. The lyrics are very extreme. I'm sure it will appeal to a lot of people, at least I hope so!"

JokerLokison

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OPPRESSOR

Photo: Frank White

Very few extreme death metal bands have survived the underground scene. At the beginning of the '90s people couldn't get enough of the stuff that horror movies are made of, but now bands are trading in their blast beats for keyboards. OPPRESSOR plows forward past all the bullshit and bad breaks, leaving label after label in waste. OPPRESSOR's *Agony* is the bands third release on their third label, MIA Records. Micha Kite talks with Tim King, bassist/vocalist about his band and their deadly style.

Pit: ***How has your songwriting changed?***

Tim King: On *Solstice of Oppression* we were trying to be the most technical and brutal band we could be. With *Agony* we decided to just kick back and let the songs flow. They have more song structure, more chorus structure. You can understand what's going on with the vocals now. This time we tried to have choruses that would ring in your head all day, instead of the deepest vocal and technical riffs that you're not going to remember as much. I think we have all around matured, which is what your supposed to do—take a step forward instead of taking a step backward.

Tell us about your record label experiences. What happened with Megalithic?

They went under, ha, ha. We are three labels for three right now. We were on Red Light, then Megalithic, and now MIA/Olympic in the US. We are on Die Hard in Europe; I couldn't ask for a better European label. They want to bring us back over there for a tour. They are really working hard; I have nothing but good things to say about them.

Brian Griffin (BROKEN HOPE) produced the LP and Jim Morris mastered it. Impressive. . .

We recorded at the same place BROKEN HOPE recorded their last two LPs, and we worked with Brian and his partner, Ross. What can I say, the recording speaks for itself. Brian did an amazing job on it. He took so much time, and had so much patience. He put in a lot of his own ideas. I couldn't be happier; we're definitely doing the next record with Brian. We mastered it at Morrissound just to get that extra edge.

Since Dustin Hardman is your manager, why aren't you on Nuclear Blast America?

Ha, ha, ha. I don't know, you'll have to ask Dustin that one. Nuclear Blast isn't going for any more metal bands, they are selling more ambient, gothic type stuff. So, I don't think they would have pushed it like the new stuff they are signing, and it would have just been thrown out there. We wanted to have the proper promotion, make sure we tour the states, and we got that with MIA.

If your aiming for a more understandable vocal approach, why did you use your old and new vocal styles ?

It's more of a transitional period. I didn't want to use just one or the other; I tried a lot of different things vocally.

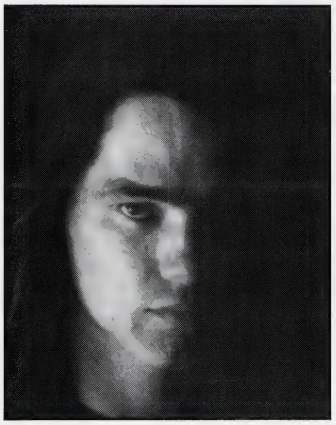
What are your two favorite songs on the LP?

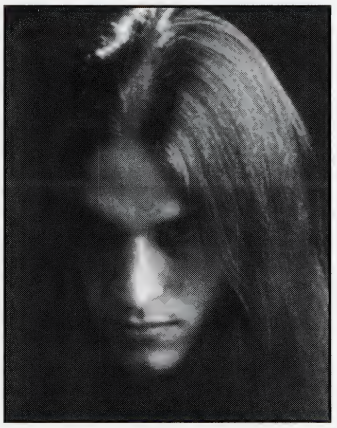
I would say "Gone" and "Passage". I love the chorus to "Gone". I would come to practice and the guys would be singing it. That's how I knew I did a good job on that one, they usually don't know what the hell I'm singing. And I like "Passage" because it's just an all out brutal song—I like the guitar and the tremolo.

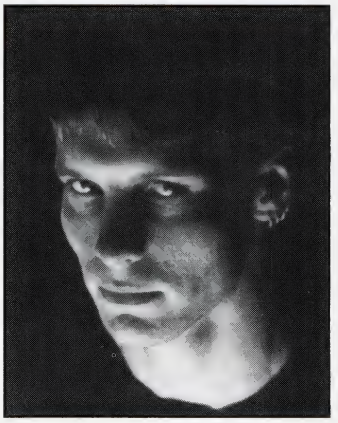
Your touring with* CANNIBAL CORPSE, BRUTAL TRUTH *and* IMMOLATION. *How did that come about?

MIA set up the whole tour. Alex Webster, from CANNIBAL CORPSE, is the one who asked us to be on the tour; him and the guys from IMMOLATION dig our EP. So, the help of them, and our label, is what got us the tour. We start in the beginning of Jan in New Orleans and go until late Feb. I guess we're doing an Instore at Mosh Pit Records, so that will be cool. I can't wait to see that store.

Micha Kite







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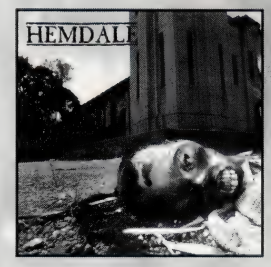

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brutal truth

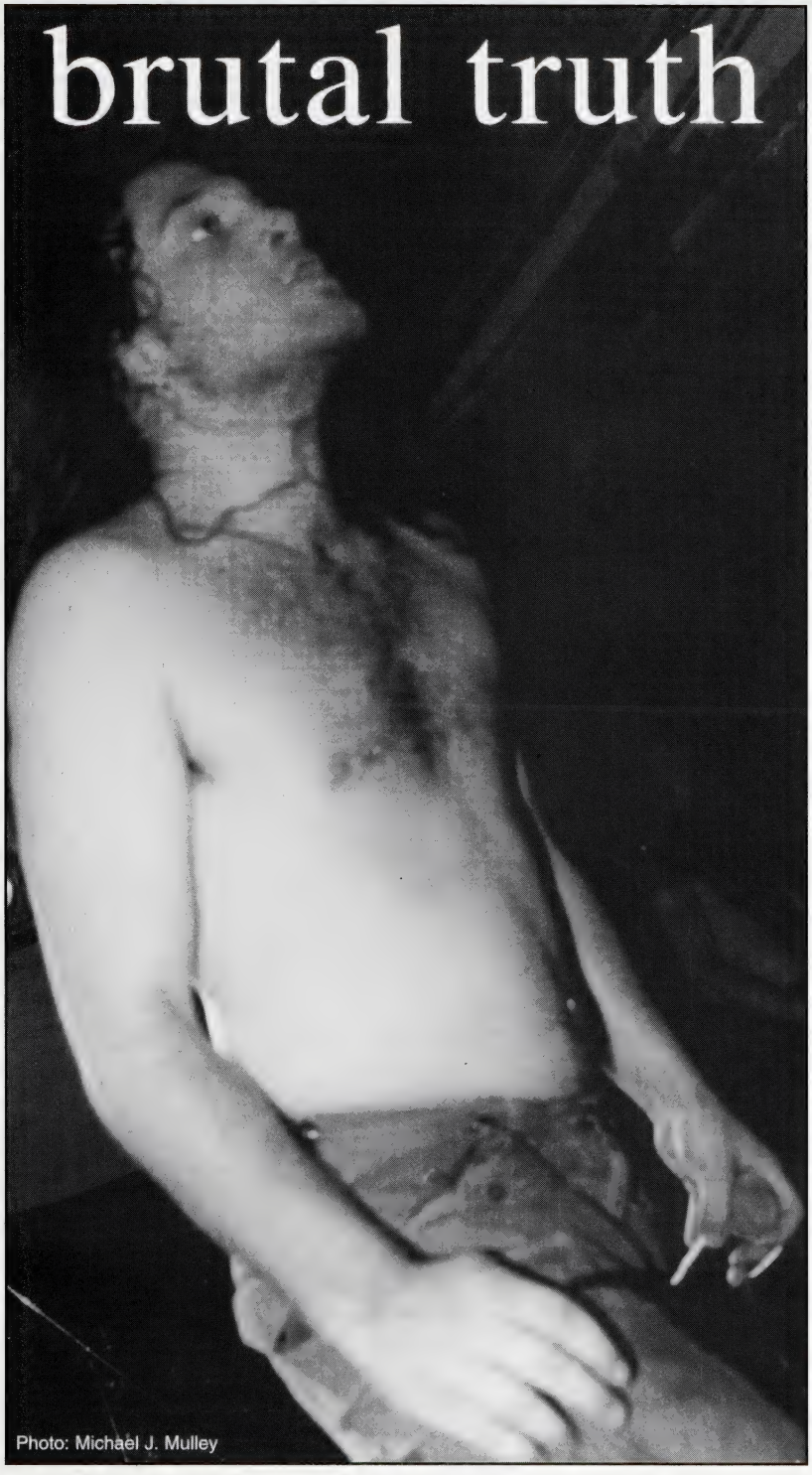

Photo: Michael J. Mulley

BRUTAL TRUTH is, as drummer Rich puts it, "an expression of musical extremity." A fitting description for this grind-core ensemble, somewhat spawned from NUCLEAR ASSAULT when bassist Danny Lilker escaped from the fading band. The current line-up, Kevin Sharp (vox, powertools), Danny, Brent "Gurn" McCarty (guitars) and Rich Hoak have just released their latest effort, *Kill Trend Suicide*. Rich talked with Pit after the band's whirlwind tour with CANNIBAL CORPSE.

Pit: ***If you wouldn't mind giving us a brief history. I know that Dan Lilker was in NUCLEAR ASSAULT.***

Rich Hoak: It was like ten years ago—late '80s—that thrash metal started to really wank. So, Dan was sitting in his bedroom searching for extremity, and he made these demos of grind-core. It was just a four-track and a drum machine, but he played it for people and they were like, "Oh, man, crazy. Wow, fuckin' grind-core!" So, as N.A. started to suck more and more Dan started to work on a little side project of grind-core with Gurn, who was N.A.'s guitar tech. And then Danny left N.A. because they were totally stupid. They got Kevin to be the singer, and they soon signed up with Earache.

How long have you been playing as the band you are now?

A little over three years—since Nov. '93 we've put out *Need to Control, Kill Trend Suicide*, plus a bunch of singles. We've been to Europe a couple of time, the States a couple of time—we just finished the CANNIBAL CORPSE tour—Mexico, Australia, Japan. Hopefully we'll go back to all those places on our upcoming World Tour!

How'd the tour go with* CANNIBAL CORPSE*?

Fucking killer!

Are they one of your inspirations?

No, no. They draw tons of people, and we get to go out and knock them dead with grind-core. It's pretty cool. There were a lot of people at each show, and there were a lot of people who just came out to see **BRUTAL TRUTH**. There were obviously people that we were getting through to, you know. Plus, playing in front of death metal kids, there are always some of them bound to like our music. Some hate it because it's not death metal, but others can make the leap. There are elements [to our music] that are death, same way there's elements of anything. That's why we hope lots of people can fucking grab hold of it. We play some punk-rock, sort of, and we see a lot of those people coming out.

People always ask us, "What's up with the NYC death metal underground?" I don't know, because whenever we play, for every hundred people that come out maybe twenty of them are death metal people. It's not like everybody from the metal scene comes to our shows. We're finding that now, especially in NYC, it's a mixture of people: punk-rockers and crusty punks, hardcore kids, metal people and grind-core people. And all those different kinds of bands are playing around, too.

It's cool that a band like yours not only attracts different types of people, but that you blend different types of music.

Right. That's what we've always listened to. I always played punk-rock and hardcore before I joined **BRUTAL TRUTH**. This is the first metal band that I've played in. I mean, I played little bits of metal like BLACK SABBATH and that kind of metal—not death or speed metal or grind-core, not even thrash.

What got you into this then?

I was playing with NINEFINGER before, with Mike Dean, and he went back to CORROSION OF CONFORMITY. When we played

our last show in NYC I was hanging out with Kirk from BUZZOVEN (I highly recommend BUZZOVEN). I said, "I think Mike's gonna quit and go back to C.O.C.—they gave him an offer he can't refuse. I'm looking for a band to play drums in, do you know anyone looking for a drummer?' And he goes, "Yeah, my friend Kevin, his band's looking for a drummer." They [**BRUTAL TRUTH**] gave me a tape and I learned four or five of the tunes and went to audition. That was it.

Is there any message you hope to get across?

Not really. We write music that sounds good to our ears, you know. Our music is pretty meaningful; it would be silly if our lyrics weren't meaningful, too. I mean, our lyrics aren't all heavy, we've got the occasional song about pot-smoking, or something. Basically our lyrics come down to thinking for yourself and trying to do what should be done. They address issues like polluting the world, or there's a song about a TV evangelist suckering people for money. In all, it comes down to being responsible.

What does* BRUTAL TRUTH *mean?

I don't know, Danny came up with that. He was just searching

Photo: Frank White

for a heavy name—he's good at coming up with names. He thought of ANTHRAX. Despite what those guys say in different interviews, Dan does claim he thought of ANTHRAX. He might've thought of NUCLEAR ASSAULT; he definitely came up with **BRUTAL TRUTH**. Sounds good, rolls off the tongue. I don't know if it really means anything. To me, it's an expression of musical extremity.

Errin Klein

RELAPSE RECORDS

Black Mark Production is known best for being the home of BATHORY and EDGE OF SANITY, but the label's growing roster also includes some of Europe's finest new-school power metal outfits. While bands like DIVINE SIN and HEADS OR TALES sorta just take up space, it's groups like TAD MOROSE and MEMENTO MORI who ensure a bright (if never extremely popular) future for the form.

Add **MORGANA LEFAY** to that list, with the release of their new album, *Maleficium*. Once known more for their pointlessly-long tunes, heavy on the acoustic guitars (with flowery titles like "Alley of Oaks" and "Symphony of the Damned"), *Maleficium* finds the band at their heaviest and most cohesive, offering twelve solid tracks of potent, powerful melodic metal—still a little corny, to be sure, but nonetheless enjoyable to fans of such things.

"We tried to combine our *Secret Doctrine* and *Sanctified* albums for this one," says vocalist Charles from his home in Sweden. "It is impossible for me to say if it is heavier, because we are still so close to it. I could tell you much later, when we have had it for a while." Charles created the lyrics to *Maleficium* as a concept album—"I'd been reading a lot about the Inquisition, and I thought it would be a good topic." Truly, the tale of evil, torture and condemnation in the guise of good is worthy of a King Diamond-esque metal fable. "It was difficult. I had to re-arrange a few things in the studio—the guys write all the music and I put the lyrics on top of it."

The "Morganazation" (their word, not mine) has been busy of late releasing *Past Present Future*, a collection of older tracks (including a cover of ABBA's "Voulez-Vous," done "because ABBA is the most famous Swedish band, and some of us are fans of them. But mostly just for fun. Everyone asks us about that!") and touring the Continent with GAMMA RAY, a band for whom Charles had nothing but praise. "That was such a great tour! We got to use 90% of their sound system and lights, which is unheard of for a support band. Their fans were great; we had a great time with the band and crew. It was a blast." Certainly more fun than their introduction to touring, the unfortunate Viking Invasion label tour with CEMETARY and INVOCATOR. "It was such a disaster! No crew; we loaded all our own gear. The food was bad, the bus was ugly, no one came to the shows. The bus driver was on heroin, listening to whale songs at full blast while he drove our bus down the Alps into Switzerland! But we certainly learned a lot."

Charles is quick to point out that in his native Sweden bands like **MORGANA LE FAY** are even more underground than death or black metal. "Sweden follows the U.S. trends. Heavy metal is definitely not popular here like it is in Germany, eastern Europe and Japan. We have more fans in other countries than at home," he points out, including a tiny but devoted stream of fan mail from the States. And while the bands on Black Mark "aren't in competition or anything," Charles says he doesn't see the label as a unifying force or a 'family' of musicians. "We just sort of ended up on Black Mark, and we're still here," he explains. "I don't really know why, because they are too small to promote well or get exposure to the bands. We sell more with each record, so perhaps someday we will move to a bigger label." Probably not, I'd say, given the state of melodic metal in the hearts and minds of so few, but bands like **MORGANA LEFAY** are perhaps better off where they are in the grand scheme of things—a source of listening pleasure for an enthusiastic few who'd rather listen to what they like than what they're told is cool.

KeithBergman

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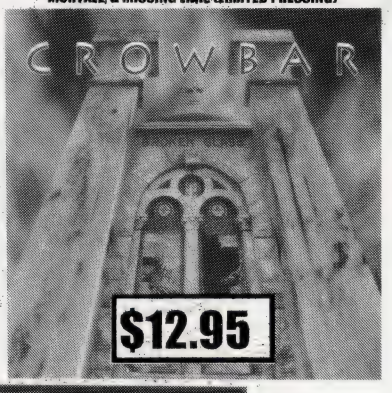

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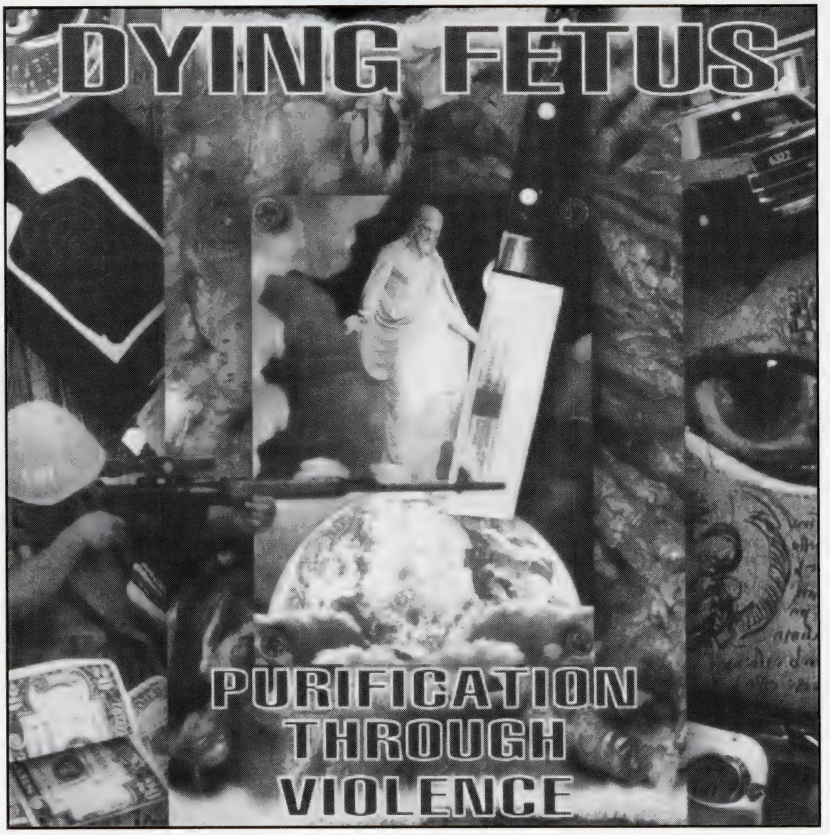

Experts seem to believe that one's environment has a great deal to do with one's behavior. If you subscribe to this theory, and then listen to *Purification Through Violence*, the debut full length disc by the deathgrind powerhouse, **DYING FETUS**, you must then ponder the question: What social shithole did these guys crawl out of?!? To get to the root of the band's violent psyche, I delved into conversation with **DYING FETUS** bassist, co-vocalist, lyricist, spokesman, and all around nice guy, Jason Netherton.

Photo: Steve Miller

DYING FETUS, with blunt, antagonistic, downright hateful lyrics, and their technically brutal grind, have recently dropped a bomb on the underground with their debut release, *Purification Through Violence*. Selling 2000 copies in under two month's time is amazing for a debut CD coming out on a small and relatively new label. Is the band excited? "Definitely!" Jason answers, "And another thing we are excited about is that in Europe, [Pulverizer Records] licenses CDs through Die Hard Progress Records, the label that SUFFOCATION is on now. We've got Europe totally covered, because they get their stuff in all the stores over there."

Photo: Steve Miller

When it comes to the music, Jason admits that they possess a wide range of influences that helped shape *Purification Through Violence*. "Actually, we have a lot of rap influences, and hardcore, and grind, too. I wouldn't say that we're the traditional death metal band. We like a lot of the groove stuff, too. I think it keeps the music from being one-dimensional."

As for the lyrics, they are equally intense, though they may not be as diverse as the album's musical influences, at least not in general. You see, they are mostly about how disgusting humankind is, and how they are to be obliterated. Songs like "Skullfucked"—a bitch-hatin', dope smokin' little ditty which Jason says best describes guitarist John's attitude—and "Beaten Into Submission"—a song about Nazi Germany's quest for genocide—epitomize **DYING FETUS**' angst ridden poetry. "For the lyrics on this album I didn't have one single approach," explains Jason. "On half the songs, I tried to use John's perspective on things, and the other half I talked about war and stuff, which is what I'm into."

Where does all the hate come from, anyway? Jason replies, "It's the music we play, I guess! A lot of it has to do with motherfuckers that rip us off, piss us off and chicks that won't let us fuck 'em. I'm definitely not a hate-monger! I get pissed off sometimes, and that's when I write the lyrics! We can do the music and not have to kill somebody, though John's tried! We really hate this one guy, though. He lives in Illinois. We hate him, man!"

Photo: James Groot

With all the luck this band has had lately, combined with the overall extremes that they reach with their music, I was surprised to find this Jason guy so laid back. "We've been doing this for five years now. John [Gallagher], who's the other guitar player, and myself formed **DYING FETUS** in November of '91. Back then, it was a much bigger deal. We've just been doing this for so long now." Mr. Netherton believes that **DYING FETUS** has no doubt paid their dues.

Like many death metal outfits, the underground is an important source of inspiration and support for **DYING FETUS**. With certain band members receiving up to ten pieces of mail a day, Jason says that they've yet to get many negative comments. "We get enough mail so that it makes us feel like we're not doing this for nothing. We have like a core of fans that we write to all the time. When we actually got a chance to go on tour this summer, we got to meet a lot of these fans, which was cool. The underground is very important." Jason credits the band's success of late to their time on the road. The tour, with grindheads KATAKLSYM and MONSTROSITY, went amazingly well.

Currently, **DYING FETUS** is working on the music for their follow up to *Purification Through Violence*. They've yet to title the album, but are hoping for a spring of '97 release. This time, the album may have a little more of a hardcore sound, but Jason says that they'll never compromise the heaviness.

And for all you out there who think you've got what it takes to be a rock star, Jason was kind enough to share the secret of how a new band finds success. "The best thing to do is to get a good demo, with good production, and then relentlessly assault the underground with it. The best thing to do, really, is to use the 'INTERNAL BLEEDING' formula—a relentless ad campaign and talk as much shit as you can! INTERNAL BLEEDING and **DYING FETUS** started around the same time, and we kind of knew each other back then; we were pretty tight. But they had such a mass marketing campaign, and we didn't have that much. It really worked for them. Not only did they have a good ad campaign, but they're a pretty good band. I mean, if you suck, I really don't think that a good ad campaign's gonna help you much!"

email:jn4997a@american.edu

website:www.neoblast.qc.ca/dyingfetus

Joker Lokison

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Chocked full of good ol' guts and gore, *Loathing* is BROKEN HOPE's newest, and fourth, release. Instead of falling to the wayside like a lot of the other popular death acts, BROKEN HOPE hold their heads high and carry their death banner proudly through the fields of black doom and gothic atmosphere that saturate this forever churning scene. Micha Kite got a chance to talk with Jeremy Wagner (rhythm guitar) and Sean Glass (bass) right before the start of their Extremities tour, and it went something like this.

Photo: Frank White

Pit: *What were your goals on Loathing?*

Jeremy: Musically, I always try to go over the top with new ideas; I try to incorporate different scales and new techniques to make myself a better musician. I always try to keep it heavy and brutal, as well as technical. There was a kind of vibe with this record; we were all full of hate and pissed off. Lyrically, I dealt with a lot more human abnormalities than just all out horror.

Sean: I think we came into things a little differently than in the past. We wanted to make sure the aggression we have live came across on the LP. The last LP was moodier and darker.

The songs sound more involved than on past LPs, do you think you've matured as songwriters?

Sean: If you look on the album credits you'll see that Brian, Jeremy and I wrote our own songs. Then, we get together with Ryan and show the songs. At the end of the day it's all on the same wavelength—trying to achieve the same type of sound. When you put on the fuckin' vocals and the fuckin' leads, it's all fuckin' **BROKEN HOPE**.

Jeremy: On the first two LPs I wrote almost everything. On the third LP I still wrote a majority of the material, but Sean and Brian also contributed. On this LP it was a three way split, we all wrote our own songs.

Sean: We really analyzed what we were writing and made sure that even if it was a straight forward part it would come out aggressive.

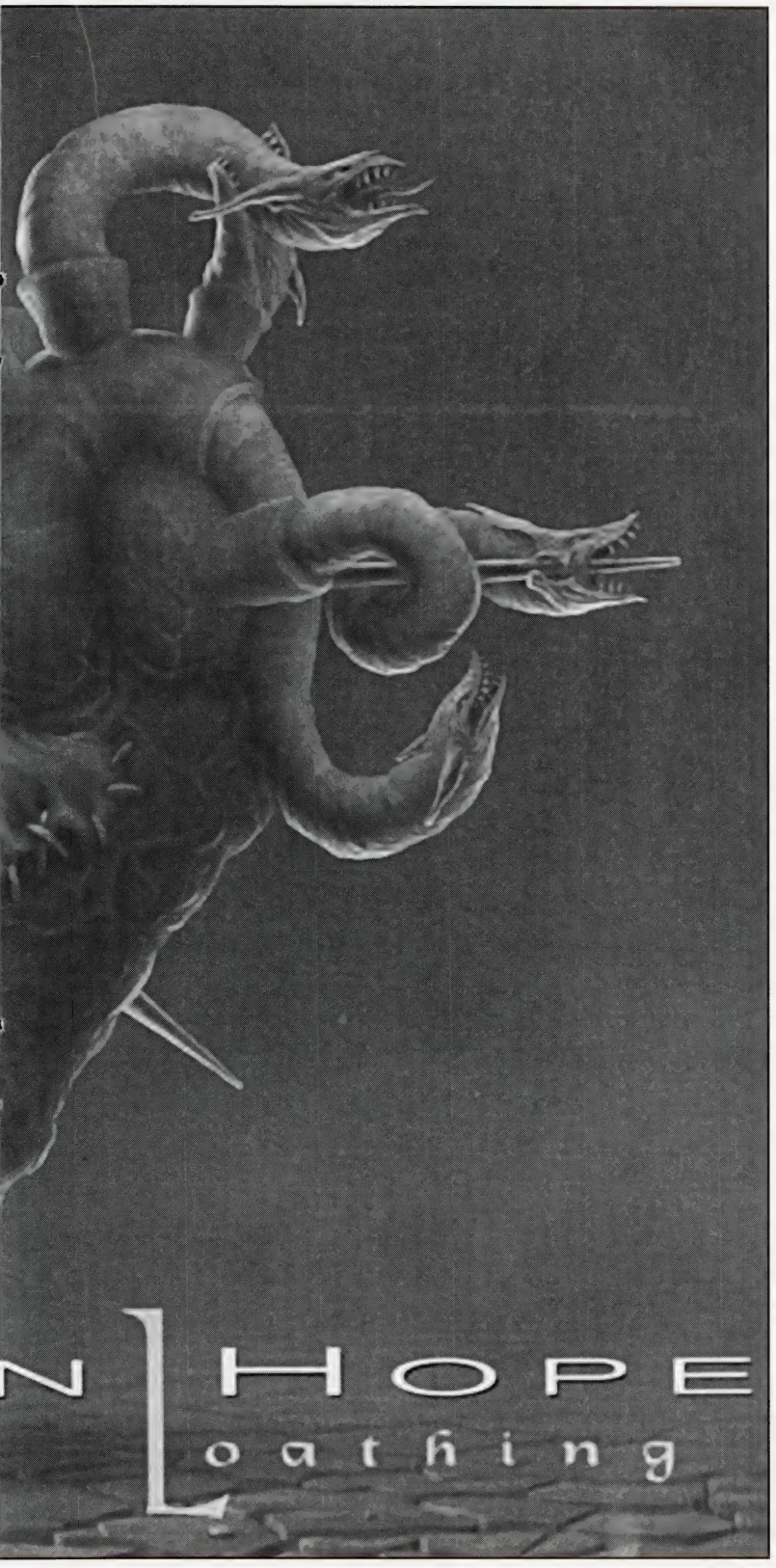
Do you think you have less emphasis on graphic lyrics?

Jeremy: I think they are still very explicit, but they're much more intelligent. Instead of being all out graphic or a splatter fest, these songs are more visceral. I think you'll get more of a gut reaction to them. They are much more disturbing than anything I have ever written—they hit home.

Sean: "The Cloning" is different than anything we've done in the past. We aren't just singing about zombies attacking nuns.

Where did you get the idea for "He Was Raped"?

Jeremy: These lyrics aren't socially conscious or religious, they're just stories I have in my head. I was watching a movie and reading some stuff on the crucifixion of Christ; when Jesus was crucified he was thrown into a Roman prison. I read an article in *Penthouse* magazine on prison rape and kind of put two and two together. I came up with something the Bible won't ever tell ya. It's something I came up with on my own. The feed back I have got-



ten from the press seems to be the most controversial thing about it.

Do you consider that blasphemy?

Jeremy: I think blasphemy has always been in my writing nature. I have always enjoyed things of a very dark and perverse nature; anything that is not conservative is up my alley. I respect other peoples beliefs as long as they don't push them on me. DEICIDE are friends of ours and I respect what they do. I'm agnostic, so I don't have any beliefs. As far as being blasphemous, I guess that's how I like to be.

Wes Benscoter did the artwork for* Loathing*, right?

Sean: Yeah. Jeremy had talked to him, and we sent him a couple different LP titles. We were like, "this guy better come up with something sick." We went to Milwaukee to hang out with him, and when he brought out the artwork we were like, "Dude, that is *Loathing*." This LP is obviously sick and fucking brutal, so I don't think the artwork detracts from the music.

What happened to the logo?

We didn't want to take away from the artwork or make the logo look stupid, so we just put the print on the front. If you look on the back and through the CDs booklet you'll see the **BROKEN HOPE** logo.

Last time I spoke with Sean he said you were listening to, and writing, slower music; is this still true?

Jeremy: On this LP I think I wrote one of the fastest songs ever: "The Cloning". I can see how "Abduction of the Dead" could be thought of as slower. I'm into the gothic stuff, definitely. I listen to a lot of bands with female vocals. I'm into some weird stuff, but not like the alternative shit you hear on the radio.

Brian Griffin (guitar) did a killer job on the production; it's going to make things a lot easier having that addition to the band.

Jeremy: Yeah. He has got to be one of the best kept secrets out there. He can make a product that is just as good as Collin Richardson, or Terry Date—no disrespect to those guys.

Sean: A band like FEAR FACTORY has a budget about five times the size of ours, also.

Jeremy: A lot of these bands get budgets that can buy cars and houses, we get a budget that could buy you a VW bug. [laughter]

What's the story on the Extremities tour?

Sean: We were all talking about certain death metal bands that have changed their roots, and how their not taking out death acts anymore. Their taking out acts that sound like KORN, or whatever. We aren't like that. When you come to see a **BROKEN HOPE** concert, you know it's going to be brutal. And I think the bands opening up for us better be brutal. We put together this tour called Extremities to say, "Look, you fucking people, it's 1997 and death isn't dead!" We get mail all the time, and there are enough people out there buying this LP to make us happy. We are going to take out some bands that we like, so we picked up VADER and MONSTROSITY. We don't care if you can't find VADER's new LP in the stores.

Sean: Anyone who listens to **BROKEN HOPE** knows who the fuck VADER is, so why not take these bands on tour with us.

Jeremy: We talked to Metal Blade about this and said we want an extreme package. The vice president, Mike, at Metal Blade said let's call the tour Extremities, and we all just loved it. You had the Grind Chrusher tour four or five years ago and nothing since. CANNIBAL CORPSE is the only other band taking extreme acts on the road with them, and I respect them for that.

Any last comments?

Sean: Stay in touch with the underground. Look out for new bands, because it could be that band in your backyard kicks ass. People shouldn't jump on the bandwagon of who has the most pentagrams or upside down crosses. There are still killer death metal bands out there.

Jeremy: If your looking for one of the heaviest LPs of '97, pick up *Loathing*. It's the finest LP **BROKEN HOPE** has ever recorded, and definitely one of the heaviest. Any one who hungers for extreme music, **BROKEN HOPE**'s *Loathing* is fucking it!

Micha Kite

GRIP INC.

When Dave Lombardo left SLAYER (or was tossed out, if you prefer), rumors abounded for several years about his new project—different personnel, different band names. Finally, after several years, Metal Blade brought us **GRIP INC.**'s debut album, *Power of Inner Strength*. With ex-21 GUNS vocalist Gus Chambers, ex-DESPAIR guitarist (and producer extraordinaire) Waldemar Sorychta, and faceless bassist Jason Vie Brooks (ex-HEATHEN), the pieces were in place for an enjoyable, if somewhat pedestrian, thrash record. When I talked to Dave Lombardo shortly after that album's release, he told me that **GRIP INC**'s debut was more to set the stage for the band and introduce them to the world, and get him past the 'SLAYER-thing' once and for all (a feat that will, in all actuality, probably never happen). He promised that the second record would shake things up a bit.

The new **GRIP INC.** record has arrived, entitled *Nemesis*, and though it's not exactly a bold leap into the stratosphere, it breaks a little new ground ("The Summoning" and "Scream at the Sky" evidencing a darker, more percussive, less old-school vibe) and remains enjoyable thanks to Lombardo's fine percussive skills and Sorychta's underrated guitar riffing. I even like Chambers' rough rasp, though many others seem to disagree. When the time came to set up a band interview, having already talked to Lombardo, I arranged to speak with Sorychta—I am a fan of his production work (see TIAMAT, MOONSPELL, THE GATHERING, SAMAEL), and I was one of the six people in the U.S. who actually went out and bought both DESPAIR records (another cheesy power metal fan comes out of the closet)! Thus, I was looking forward to a long and enlightening chat with the man.

It didn't quite turn out that way.

When I was conferenced to Sorychta's German home, I found the guitarist drunk out of his Teutonic skull, with the added 'bonus' that Chambers was there, too, equally tanked. It was one a.m. in the Fatherland, Sorychta explained, and they'd already been out to the pubs. I began trying to talk to him, but it quickly became apparent that either his English wasn't holding up under the assault of all that ale, or he was just completely incoherent. Without a warning, he dropped the phone, and after a second, Chambers picked it up with a "what the fuck do you want, you wanker?"

Luckily, Chambers was more of a ranting drunk (plus English is his first language), so I could at least get a little information out of him. "I've been a professional punk rocker for twenty years," he raved, in a voice not unlike that of Arthur in the Dudley Moore flick. "I was in California selling oranges on the street, and I had a special—a free demo with every orange. Dave bought an orange off me and the rest was history!" he cackled.

I asked Chambers what a "professional punk" (as opposed to a part-time punk, I guess?) was doing in such a metal band, and he went off. "Metal—everybody's so scared of metal. What is it, they ask? Is it TYPE O NEGATIVE? Is it the EXPLOITED? Is it POISON?—About as 'metal' as me left testicle, mate! It's fuckin' shite! Metal will always be there. I put myself out on a limb by saying this, but I think that the press and TV are trying to destroy metal. Kinda like the punk era, it comes from above. I think that the best metal bands are coming from real actual feelings. The destruction of metal is actually good—let's destroy it and make something stronger! Better! There's so much crap going on!

"With the first album," he continued, changing the subject faster than the speed of beer, "we had a format in place that we had to, er, exploit—I hate to use that word for it. There were a lot of questions to answer about Dave still being able to play double-bass, and such." Such questions, if you missed it, arose when it was revealed that on *Seasons in the Abyss* SLAYER enhanced Lombardo's playing with a drum machine because, at the time, he couldn't keep up. "That record was step one, and with that in place, step two—*Nemesis*—came easily."

I asked Chambers what he was even doing in Germany. "I'm at Waldy's house for a bit," he replied (as a slurred voice in the background yelled "Don't call me Waldy!"). "I'm a bit of a nomad now. Dave's got his place in the States. [To write] we all kind of rotate houses—we stay in touch, it works really great. It's a bit like phone sex—'let's call Waldemar and give him this new riff!' It's a chemistry with the three of us—a dark and 'orrible chemistry, actually, but it works."

Three, I wondered? Where's Jason Vie Brooks? "He's out," was the curt reply. "To do this, you have to have the same orgasmic vibe—he didn't cum when the music started, like we do." Indeed. Chambers goes on, "I mean, a bass player, in this band—it's like, hook up with Dave Lombardo, or don't hook up at all. It's demanding because we really don't want a second guitarist, so when Waldy goes off on a crazy solo, we need someone there who can keep it together."

I tried to ask more, but "Waldy" insisted on getting the phone back and things sorta went downhill from there (such as his getting pissed when I referred to him as Century Media's 'house producer'). Finally, I tried to extricate myself from the conversation without just hanging up on the drunks, and Chambers came back with some final words of wisdom for Pit readers everywhere—"Look man, listen. Make sure you keep your penis clean, all right?" You've been told, dear readers.

Keith Bergman

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GOREFEST

After nearly having their latest release, *Soul Survivor*, lost in the shuffle following the split between Nuclear Blast and Relapse, GOREFEST are finally getting on track with some promotion of their fourth album. On the line from his home in Holland, vocalist/bassist Jan-Chris de Koeyer talks to Pit Magazine about the evolution and future of GOREFEST.

Pit: *Your latest album,* Soul Survivor*, has a definite '70s feel to it; what influenced that?*

Jan-Chris de Koeyer: Not so much of that is my influence, it's mostly Boudewyn and Eddy's, our lead guitarist and drummer. For this album they wrote almost all of the material, about 80% of it. Boudewyn is totally into LED ZEPPLIN, THIN LIZZY and of course DEEP PURPLE. We had a hammond in the studio; I thought it was something new for us. It was a welcome change after six years of having to be brutal. We figured out that you can still be heavy, but there can also be a lot of melody in it, or much more grooves than just plain heavy riffing.

Can you give us an overview of your four albums?

We had *Mindloss*, which basically was the two demos *Tangled in Gore* and *Horrors in a Retarded Mind*. It was those demos re-recorded with one new song, "Mental Misery". Death metal by the book, as it was supposed to be played in '89-'90. A nice debut album, nothing more, nothing less. Then we had *False*, our second album, on which we had a new drummer and new guitarist. Again, produced by Colin Richardson. One, if I may say so, of the classic European death metal albums. All of a sudden we were big in Europe. We were supporting DEICIDE on their biggest tour in Europe—like 1500 people a night. Some nights Glen came to us and said we kicked their ass. On our third album, *Erase*, we didn't want to do another *False* album, which is what everyone expected. We missed Colin Richardson on the production. We wanted to change more than we actually did on the album; I think we were a little afraid to do what we wanted to do at that time. At least that's my feelings about the album. It was going away from death metal already—getting a little more melodic, fewer fast songs. It still got raving reviews and sold very well in Europe. Now we have *Soul Survivor*, which is what I think we wanted to do on the *Erase* album. Every time caring less about what the press will think of it or what people expect.

Do you think most of your initial audience still remains with you?

It changed; we're talking about seven years. Half the audience changed with us, grew with us. And now there are a lot of people that listen to rave. Also, there's a lot of people that think we're utter bullshit—"*Mindloss* was the best album, *False* was sorta OK, but

Photo: Frank White

the rest sucks dick." There's a lot more people that do like the metal genre as a whole—not necessarily only CANNIBAL CORPSE, DEATH and CARCASS, but from AC/DC to CARCASS. More of those people are into us, also a lot of young kids that do not necessarily listen to metal.

Do you think the name* GOREFEST *is still applicable to your band?

It's a name that everyone knows, but it has nothing to do with gore, or whatever. We had a lot of bullshit with the old guitarist and drummer, mainly with the guitarist; they stole the name back in the spring of '92. We had finished the *False* album, but it wasn't released yet. Then we got all these letters from lawyers saying we couldn't use the name, we couldn't print t-shirts. We won in the end. But, back then, I said let's change the name, fuck it. We knew the *False* album would make a crushing debut. I was completely into changing the name, but Boudewyn and Eddy really wanted to keep the name. It's just a name; in Europe most people don't even know what it means. We got it from a magazine we used to read called *Fangoria*.

How has metal's popularity maintained and even flourished in Europe?

It's not everywhere in Europe. Germany is like the stronghold of metal, Austria as well. These fans don't give a fuck if IRON MAIDEN, or something, is not hip, they only care about the music.

What was your opinion of the Nuclear Blast/Relapse split?

To be honest, the US releases have been fucked up by Nuclear Blast/Relapse. *Erase* came out and two weeks later they changed from RED to Caroline. I don't know if Caroline even picked us up. With this one it's even more funny, the album was out for two days and then they split from Relapse.

What is your contractual situation with Nuclear Blast now?

We are finished with Nuclear Blast. We served our contract and met our four albums. In Europe we've already signed to a new company, and in the U.S. we'd like to sign to Metal Blade.

Who did you sign with in Europe?

Epic, Sony! We're going major cockrock (laughs). We look at it like another big adventure; we'll see what's going to happen.

Tell us about your recently completed European tour.

It was five bands: ROTTING CHRIST from Greece, THEATER OF TRAGEDY from Norway, MOONSPELL from Portugal, SAMAEL from Switzerland, GOREFEST from Holland and us. So, it was a very international type bill. It was bringing in between 800 and 1500 people a night; it was very good and successful.

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Do you believe in magic? Well, you must, if you take into consideration that one of today's top black metal acts hails from the United States, and not Scandinavia! After two amazingly successful releases under their bullet belts, the Texan trio, **ABSU**, are poised yet again to unleash another mythological occult rock barrage upon fans worldwide.

By now, most fans of extreme metal are familiar with **ABSU**. With two albums, a European tour (with IMPALED NAZARENE and SADISTIK EXEKUTION), and a US tour that brought ENSLAVED from Norway, **ABSU** have been very busy creating music and delivering it to the starving global scene. 1997 will be no exception as Osmose Productions release their latest spell, *The Third Storm of Cythra'ul*. For those of you unfamiliar with Celtic mythology, drummer/vocalist Emperor Proscriptor Magikus McGovern explains, "[Cythra'ul] is the Irish/Gaelic definition of the abyss, or the life of destruction, or Celtic hell. I wanted to come up with a catchy title for the album, so I thought: the third storm—being it's our third album—and Cythra'ul—being the Celtic definition of the abyss—as **ABSU** is the Mesopotamian definition of abyss. So, I thought I'd use the Gaelic term, as all of our ancestral traits and genealogies go back to Scottish and Irish heritage. The title is then an analogy for the third album of the abyss, which is what **ABSU** is all about. It should be out by the time everyone's reading this. I do feel that it is our strongest, most powerful album to date!"

Every album that **ABSU** has created marks a different phase in the bands attitude. From the poetic mystical darkness of *Barathrum: V.I.T.R.I.O.L* to the mythologically influenced old school death/thrash of *The Sun of Tiphareth*, the band's music has shown a diverse range of styles and inspirations. Proscriptor sees all of the albums as being quite similar, including their latest release. "It's like all of our other albums. We've always been a mythological-occult-metal band, ever since the first album, 'til now. For *The Third Storm of Cythra'ul* we wanted to concentrate on writing speed oriented death/thrash songs. This one is a lot faster and a lot more hateful than *The Sun of Tiphareth*. We just got faster and came up with a bunch of new creative ideas for song structure. There is really no space in between the songs. It's like: you inhale, you play *The Third Storm of Cythra'ul*, and thirty-eight minutes later, when the album's done, you can exhale!

"Lyrically, and as far as the themes behind the album," he continues, "we're moving from past immortal spirits onto knighthood, battlecraft, bloodlust, and different ideologies. When I say 'bloodlust', I mean the fathoming of our ancestral roots." He also added that this new release is very personal, as it has a great deal to do with the first historical recollections of their ancestral heritage, dating back to the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Proscriptor noted that **ABSU** is not a concept band, but that the albums are a collaboration of tales summarized by the album's title.

ABSU has always been a group highly influenced by the powers of magick, which has been obvious by their lyrics and titles on previous albums. Some people may wonder if these guys are for real. According to Proscriptor, magick is an important aspect of the band's lifestyle. "A lot of people are like, 'Hey! Have you read the last **ABSU** interview? Yeah, they think they're so evil, they think they're true, they think they study all this occult shit. . .' You know, I don't think like that! I mean, I just don't want to be incorporated with the human manifestation. I study magick because it highly interests me, and I feel that I can use it metaphysically throughout my own body and soul." Proscriptor feels that his magickal practice improves his life, but his main goal is to rid himself of petty human disturbances, that may disrupt his creative flow. Does he feel that he's a misanthropic person? "Man, I'm just a rock 'n' roll thrasher, but in some aspects, I think I am. In an optimistic way, not really in a pessimistic way. I mean, to please myself."

Despite their acclaim around the world, **ABSU** has not had the same recognition in their native Texas, but Proscriptor says that this is beginning to change. "Year by year we're becoming a name throughout the state. We were even hated here for awhile, because a lot of bands throughout the Dallas area act as a whole. **ABSU** decided to stay away from the human manifestation, and stop playing live performances, because we wanted to concentrate on becoming good musicians. To this day we are still learning how to play our instruments. You never stop learning how to play your instruments! We just decided that we wanted to become a good studio band, and it was just a waste of our time to play in Dallas. When touring opportunities came around, we took them up, because that's worth it! We really can't play random shows, as **ABSU** does not have a permanent bass player."

After the release of their first album, **ABSU** trimmed down to a three piece, hindering their ability to play out. In Proscriptor's opinion, this was the best thing for the band. "It's less social. Shaftiel, Equitant, and I have been working, writing, and arranging music for nearly ten years now. We just thought that a core of three musicians would be the best thing for the band. It's the best decision **ABSU** has ever made, period! Other people create obstacles, but what we have is natural. It's magick."

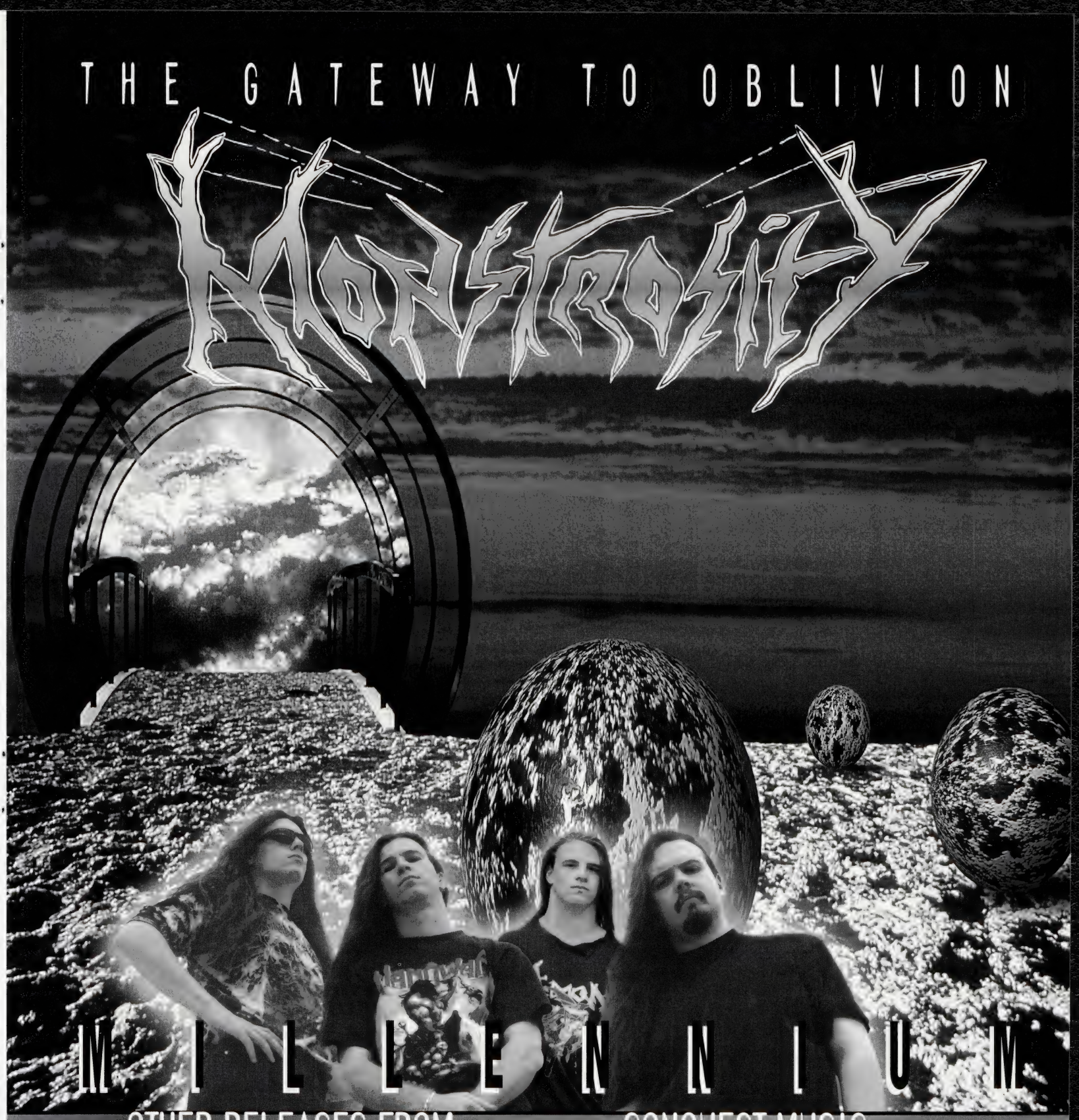
Besides all the time **ABSU** spends creating music, together and with their solo projects (Proscriptor recently released his solo effort, *The Venus Bellona*, for Cold Meat Industry sub-label, Cruel Moon), they will also be appearing in an upcoming film for New Dimension Films, entitled *Witch's Way*. The movie, that starts shooting this summer, is based around the Salem Witch Trials, and the band has been asked to play 'themselves'. On top of this movie role, *ABSU* is also recording a song for the soundtrack to the movie *Gummo*, which is being produced by New Line Productions. The movie should be out in the spring, and the soundtrack features songs by SLAYER, EYEHATEGOD, SEPULTURA, SWORDMASTER, and BETHLEHEM, just to name a few. Proscriptor says that the film is an avant-garde approach to the darkside of life of two teenagers.

When asked if Proscriptor had a closing comment to add to the interview, he made this statement, "Yes, actually I do. I have an equation for the human race. This is my final statement: 6 x 11(to the 2nd power) = 33 x 22 = 726. And 726 is the sign of my number."

Joker Lokison

THE GATEWAY TO OBLIVION

MONSTROSITY



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'Mata Leao'? Doesn't that mean kill him? Nope! I thought I knew my spanish; turns out all I really know are the bad words. And *Mata Leao* isn't even spanish! I do know however that *Mata Leao* is the title of the latest album from BIOHAZARD.

Returning with their hard blows, jabs, and kicks included, no one who has followed this band could be disappointed. No fancy tricks, no wannabe innovative electronic overindulgences, just no-holds-barred street hardcore complete with their ever successful and diverse ingredients of hip-hop, rock and metal. All this delivered with the ferocity that only a band whose name means hazardous to biological lifeforms could muster.

While in the background NEUROSIS were pounding everyones brains out, I got a chance to speak with drummer Danny Schuler and former HELMET guitarist, Rob Echeverria, about BIOHAZARD and *Mata Leao*.

Pit: *Your live performance is a combination of an explosive stage presence accompanied and complete concentration. How do you pull it off?*

Danny: The show is everything; the records, all they really are is a recording of the performance. To me, when you listen to a record it's always kind of sterile. Even when you turn it up really loud you don't get the energy you get when you're seeing it all live and you are part of the vibration. So, to us, the live show is absolutely everything. It's a do or die thing. We play our hardest and our best everyday.

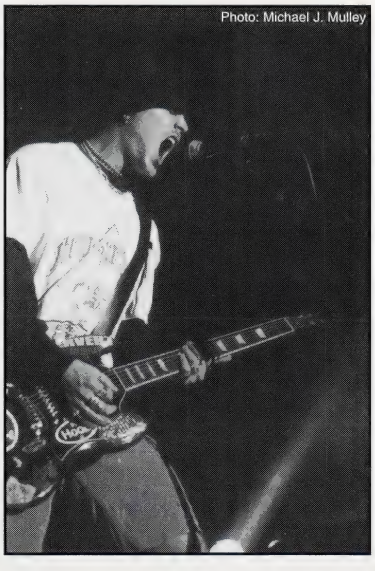
Photo: Michael J. Mulley

Tell us where BIOHAZARD is at these days. It seems as if your lyrics have become more personal, rather than the socio-political themes of past releases.

Danny: *State of the World Address* was the four of us looking outward at the rest of the world. It's our own observation, because the way we look at the world maybe isn't the way you or someone else sees it. That was *State of the World*, but *Mata Leao* is, like you said, much more personal. It deals with a lot of issues in our lives. For us, it's just getting a lot of shit off our chest. It is probably the most personal record we've ever written, and it's different in the fact that it's not so outwardly political. After a while you start to get frustrated with that type of theme, because you scream about changes in the world and the way things are and nothing changes. I don't think a song or a band can change the world; it's up to the people in the world to change the world. However, we do always try to be positive.

This is your second release on Warner Bros. Records; was there any pressure in doing this album?

Danny: We're still a brand new band to a lot of people, but we've been together for a long time. We've toured for a long time and have played a lot of different places, so when it comes down to doing a record we're a little more seasoned. This is our fourth record, and everytime we do it we mature a littel more. We're really looking forward to the next one; the band is stronger than it's ever been now that Rob's in it, and the next record will have Rob on it.

Rob, how did you ended up joining* BIOHAZARD*?

Rob: When I was with HELMET we played a couple festivals together, and we have a lot of mutual friends. One day Evan called me up and we talked about jamming. Everything felt right, so we just went for it.

Danny: On our end, we had been auditioning. We were in Los Angeles recording *Mata Leao* at the time. When we went home to New York after finishing the record we went thru more auditions. But, we were waiting for Rob because we had a feeling that he was going to be the guy. Rob didn't play on the last record, he did come in right after, however.

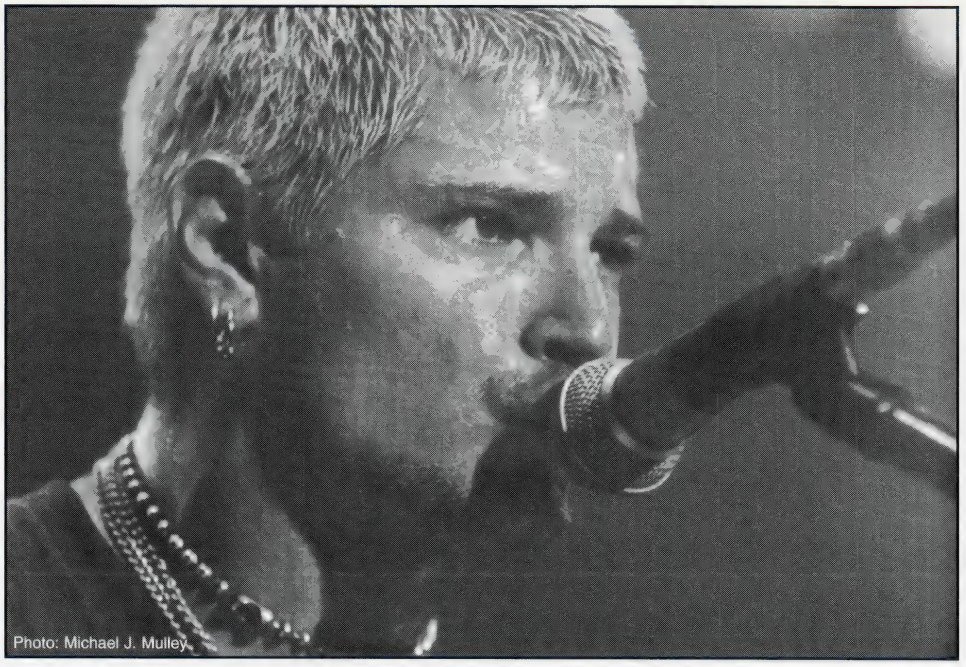
Photo: Michael J. Mulley

Rob: The whole state of the band, and myself, feels more positive. We all seem a little more content about the whole thing. We're all anxious to go to work together.

Danny: After Bobby left it was myself, Billy and Evan, and it was almost like that was a new band because we did the record like that. Then we got Rob in the band and it was like "Boom!" *Mata Leao* is already so old for us because Rob is here and it's a totally different flavor, a totally different energy.

Rob, you're coming into an established act, but you're not just someone off the street. How do you feel your prior experience will contribute to the next record?

Rob: Even though we didn't grow up together, we all grew up with the same kind of vibe. As far as the next record goes, the cards haven't been dealt yet, and it's hard to say. But, we all feel the right thing will come out because we all are on the same pace. Chemistry is definitely there.

Danny: I think it's good that we're all getting to know each other touring like this. When we do go in to work on the next record we'll already have been a complete band, working together on this level. Playing together and living together is very important, because it reflects widely into the music we create.

Rob: I've been in positions where you just walk in not knowing the people or the songs, going into the studio very cold and sterile.

Danny: It would have been really weird if Rob had come into the band at the time we were getting ready to record *Mata Leao*. I mean, it probably would have come out great, but now we're getting to know each other more and appreciating each other creatively. That, we feel, really helps.

Was there any temptations to remain a three piece?

Danny: No. But, for a minute we did think of how easy it was. Doing a record you could do it like that, but live we felt we had to have that other guitarist. Even more than finding someone who is a competent guitar player, we needed to find the type of person that was able to fit in our mold. Rob's playing is so precise, it make me want to play better. And he's very easy to work with. That right there removes a lot of the stress that can come along with finding a new member.

Mike Trujillo

Photo: Frank White

KARMA TO BURN

Let me tell you an odd little story: Three guys from West Virginia start a band, and they send out demos. They get signed, but they don't get released—they're held back 'til they get a singer. So, they get a singer who never sang before. Now they are finally ready to release their self-titled debut album. The feeling of the album is dark, twisted, and bizarre. Stranger yet are some of their song titles: "Patty Herst's Closet Mantra", "Mt. Penetrator" and "Twin Sisters and Half a Bottle of Bourbon", to name only a few. Interested?

Read on, and hope you've got some KARMA TO BURN.

Pit: *Give us the rundown on* KARMA TO BURN*?*

Dickie: We started three and a half years ago as an instrumental band. After about four months we got our first record offer—still we didn't have a singer. We went ahead and signed a contract, because it seemed that it would make our lives easier. When we did get a singer he started to think that he was choking all the time. We had to take him to the emergency room a bunch of times and nothing was ever wrong with him. Eventually the hospital would no longer let him leave with us.

Was it all psychosomatic?

No, he was just nuts! That was the end of our first singer. And the next singer—his parents came in the middle of the night to pick him up because they didn't want him quitting college. Then we worked a little bit with a guy named John Garcia from a band called KYUSS. But, he was from California and the rest of us from West Virginia, so it started to become a geographical inconvenience. We kept trying to get Roadrunner to put out an instrumental record and they wouldn't do it. Eventually we just asked one of our friends who had never sung before—he was a painter—and he did it.

What are your feelings on this album, and how did you come to sign with Roadrunner Records?

We had like six different offers: three of them were major labels and three were independents. We went with Roadrunner because we thought we would have the most control with the singer aspect of the band—boy were we wrong! However, we are very happy with the record. If we had to get a singer, it was very important that we get one of our friends—someone who doesn't have an ego problem, because half of our live set is still instrumental.

Was it difficult for your vocalist, Bakka, to lay vocals and lyrics over established instrumental songs?

Fuck, yeah! Because all the songs were already recorded, he couldn't change anything.

Had you already envisioned how the vocal patterns were to be arranged so you could coach him in how you wanted them to come out?

Yeah, we tried to do that. But, most of the time we just let him be himself. He never ever sang before in his entire life. He was afraid at first; it's kind of overwhelming to go in the studio. We didn't want him to get real wigged out. Basically, he ended up writing the songs the day he went in.

So what plans do you have going at the moment?

We're going to Europe in April. We're also going to be making a couple of videos here. I'm really into low budget films and we got a hold of my favorite director of all time. We got him to do a couple of videos for us.

Mike Trujillo

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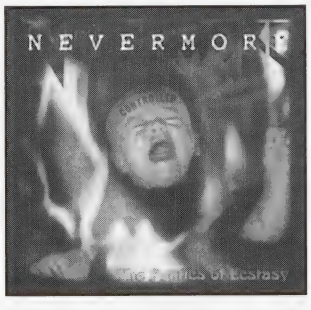
Years after SANCTUARY breathed its last, singer Warrel Dane and bassist Jeff Loomis soldier on with **NEVERMORE**, who have just released their sophomore effort, *The Politics of Ecstasy*, through Century Media. Despite a general climate of indifference toward power-metal acts, enough people remembered their previous outfit to give **NEVERMORE**'s self-titled debut a chance; and they found a classy and powerful continuation of the SANCTUARY tradition. This time out, though, things have taken a turn for the heavier, with a liberal dose of anger thrown into the mix for added bite.

"It's not intentionally heavier," Warrel Dane confesses. "A lot of the first record was actually old material, originally written for the third SANCTUARY record." When it came time to write all new songs for their follow-up, the band made the conscious decision "to put no limits on ourselves, or on our songs. If that meant getting self-indulgent, so be it. We're in this to please ourselves anyway."

The Politics of Ecstasy comes across as a much more malevolent record than its predecessor, full of songs about manipulation, governmental abuse, and bitter self-reflection, yet with an undercurrent of hope placed in self-determination and clarity of purpose. Certainly, such an attitude has saved Dane, and **NEVERMORE**, from winding up on the slag heap of 'where are they now?' '80s metal personae. "If you don't persevere," he stated matter-of-factly, "you'll never succeed. SANCTUARY got to a certain point, and then we lost a lot of momentum. I think we're back at that point with this band, and we can take it to another level from here."

Despite SANCTUARY's two albums (*Refuge Denied* and *Into the Mirror Black*) selling 110,000 copies each worldwide on Epic, the band "never saw a dime from it," Dane reveals. "We had a manager who was really fucked up, though. We spent a fortune in the studio, on plane tickets for promotional trips, shit like that. We learned a lot from things like that, but SANCTUARY was so in debt to Epic that we'd have had to sell a lot more than we did to ever make anything. I still think if we'd kept it together and released our third album, though, we would have defied a lot of people's expectations of how far that band could go." For now, **NEVERMORE** has begun to pay off slightly for the band, but they all still work day jobs—"'til we get out and tour some more, at least!"

So where did the rest of the band end up? "Dave Budbill [drums] found the Lord!" cackles Dane. "He's in Florida now, playing in some Jesus band, or something. Sean Blasell is doing soundtracks for independent films, and Lenny Rutledge is in another band. There were a lot of bad feelings for a while, but things are cooler now—I was actually at a party at Lenny's house a couple of weeks back. He put on *Into the Mirror Black* and it was like, 'holy shit!' I hadn't' heard that record in a long time." **NEVERMORE** still plays several SANCTUARY songs live, because "as a fan, I wanna see a band play their old stuff. You can never escape your past; you'd be foolish to try." Dane promises a version of "Seasons of Destruction" for their upcoming shows. Though he still stands by SANCTUARY's body of work as a whole, there are a few songs he could stand to never hear—or perform—again. "'One More Murder' does nothing for me any more," he sighs, "and the cover of [JEFFERSON AIRPLANE's] 'White Rabbit' is getting pretty tired."



Last summer **NEVERMORE** got to open for DEATH across the U.S., at the specific request of Chuck Schuldiner himself. "He'd read a review of the record when he was in Europe, and went out and bought it," Dane explains. "He liked it a lot, so he called our lawyer—his number was in the booklet—and asked if we'd tour with them. It was great, gettin' to see them play every night; we hadn't been out since SANCTUARY and it was good to see the U.S. again. In fact, we really wanna get back out right now. I'm trying to convince Century Media to bring some bands over from Europe, like TIAMAT, and do a label tour this spring. They're pretty hesitant about it so far, though."

NEVERMORE's European touring included a spot at the Dynamo Festival, as well as a slew of much larger shows than in the U.S. "Unless you go to Europe yourself, it's hard to grasp it—metal never really went away over there! Fans are a lot more dedicated. If they genuinely like you, they don't just move on and throw you away."

Having seen **NEVERMORE** on the aforementioned DEATH tour (a show notable for its lack of significant mosh pit and hordes of worshipful musicians in the crowd, divided informally into air-guitar and air-drumming sections!), I was mightily impressed and pleased to hear Dane's voice in good form—having been disappointed innumerable times by metal bands whose singers couldn't keep up outside the studio (can you say TESTAMENT?). Dane's secret to vocal success? "Large amounts of Jagermeister and beer," he swears with mock solemnity, then laughs. "I know when I can push myself, and when not to. I've taken a lot of voice lessons in the past, as well, which may or may not be a good thing! But it's never been a big problem for me, even driving around in a cold shitty van."

The future looks bright for **NEVERMORE**, and Dane seems content with their situation "I would be really hesitant to sign to a major again, assuming they wanted us! Century Media treats us better than Epic ever did, and we're finally getting our momentum back. I just wanna get out there and tour, and let people know we have a record out."

Keith Bergman

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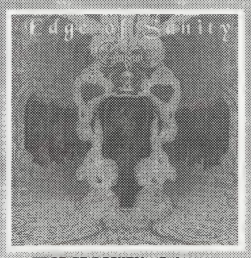

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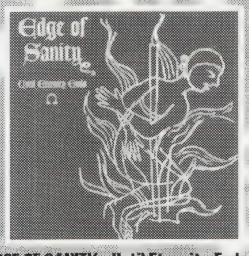

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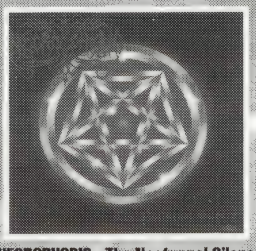

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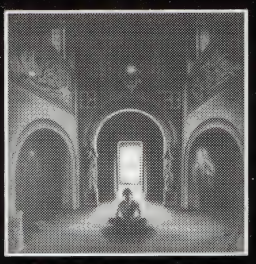

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Usurper

Whenever the scene starts to stagnate the underground gives bloody birth to a new breed. After feverishly copulating with Satan she bears a horde whom hail religiously to our heroes of yesterday. USURPER was born in Chicago in '92, combining the talents of Diabolical Slaughter on vocals, Scythe on guitars, Necromancer on bass and Apocalyptic Warlord on drums. Emerging from the four dark corners they forged a style that rings praise to the likes of SODOM, KREATOR, DESTRUCTION and CELTIC FROST. Micha Kite talks with Scythe about this band that is 'usurping' the underground.

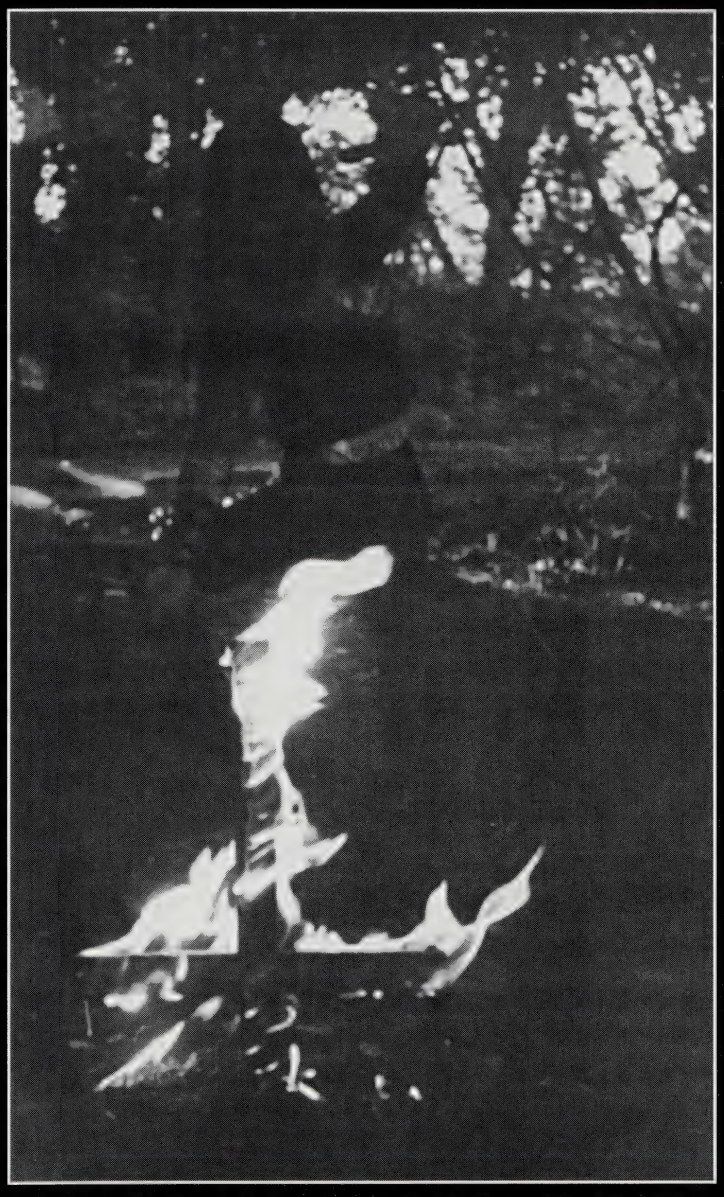
Pit: ***What brought*** **USURPER** ***together?***

Scythe: Diabolical Slaughter and I put the band together in '92. It started as a side project. We wrote some songs which we only wanted to record. Then we decided that we liked the songs a lot and wanted to make it a full time project. So, we released our first demo, *Visions of the Gods*. We pressed 600 copies and sent it to various fanzines around the world. It did really well, so we pressed another 700 and we got a few label offers.

One of which was Head Not Found, and they released our debut, *Diabolosis*.

Why is the vinyl version on Rip Records?

When we signed with HNF, we wanted it released on vinyl, and so did the Metallion. But, he ran into some financial situations which prevented him from printing vinyl. Then we lost contact with him for awhile. We still had the rights, as long as it wasn't printed on CD, so we did a limited edition with Rip. We are all huge fans of vinyl; all



my favorite LPs are on vinyl.

How was working with the Metallion?

Well, he's really honest. He doesn't have a huge label or anything, but he does have about 20 releases. And he's been doing his magazine for about ten years. He's pretty well respected, and that was the kind of label we were looking to sign with. Whenever there was money involved, we always got paid. He really helped us a lot.

Tell us about the new deal with Necropolis.

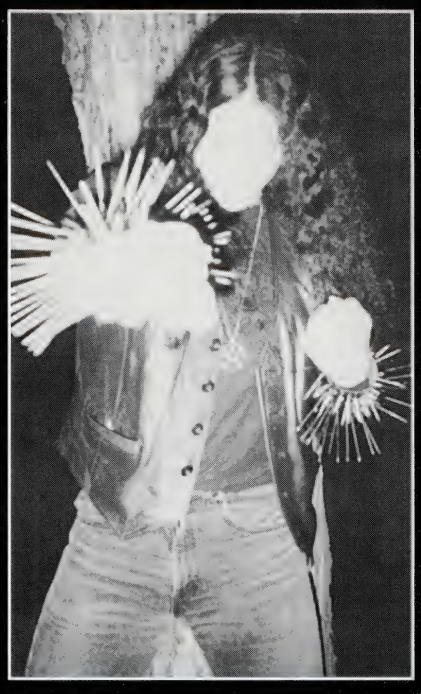
Once *Diabolosis* started selling we began to get a buzz and other labels started offering us deals. When we recorded *Diabolosis* we recorded other songs that weren't on the CD; we were going to use them for the vinyl version or release them as a mini CD. In the summer of '95 we went into the studio to record "Black Funeral" by MERCYFUL FATE for a seven inch deal that got shelved. Then in Jan. of '96 we recorded another new song, making a total of five songs for a mini CD. In the meantime, we got the deal from Necropolis offering us more promotion and tour support, bigger budget, etc. It's easier to call them here in the States. Everything seems to be really cool, so far. They are getting ready to release the new mini CD any day.

What type of metal are you into?

Mainly the older '80s metal bands, the underground stuff like CELTIC FROST, HELLHAMMER, VENOM, POSSESSED, DARK ANGEL. We wanted to start a band that had the same kind of vibe as those bands, but we wanted to do something different with it, something modern. We aren't trying the be just like them; we have other influences. It may not be totally original, but it's unique.

Would you say that you're part of death / black metal's 'old school' genre?

Yeah, I guess. Obviously we're not typical American death metal, and we're not trying to be black metal. We get a lot of different comparisons. We just use our older influences in a modern way, and whatever people want to label us is fine. There are a lot of new bands that come out that I like such as NEFILHEIM and BEWITCHED. There are cool bands from every era.



How is the scene in Chicago? I hear there is some animosity between you and* BROKEN HOPE*?

I have nothing to say about them, either way. As **USURPER**, we pretty much stand alone in the Chicago scene. We don't want to be part of the trendy scene, or whatever. I'm not going to slag anyone. They're doing their own thing and we're doing ours. Good or bad comments are only publicity for someone else. I was into MASTER, ABOMINATION. There was a band called DEVASTATION [not from TX] that was cool; MACABRE was cool. There's always a lot of good bands, but no one really supports each other.

Tell us about the new mini CD,* The Threshold of the Usurper*, that's coming out on Necropolis.

It was produced by us and engineered by a guy by the name of Brian Edan. We recorded it out here in Chicago at a place called Edan Records. And, again, it's songs that we had previously recorded between early '95 and '96. It's a little different than *Diabolosis* but on the same level. We already have eight new songs written for the new LP which we'll record in early '97. That will be called *Skeletal Season*. We end up recording every six months or so. We like to record the songs while their fresh.

Micha Kite

KORN's latest release, *Life is Peachy*, is a continuation of their brutal, self-titled debut. They're a bit more mature, perhaps; they're musical strength is more evident, definitely. Success, however, (their album debuted on the charts at #3) has not softened these boys from Bakersfield, CA. KORN—Jonathan Davis (vox), Brian Welch (guitar), Fieldy (bass), and David (drums)—talked with Pit soon after their October release date of *Life is Peachy*, and right at the start of more grueling touring in support of this much awaited album.

Pit: ***You were in Wax Trax [Denver] when your new album was released—how'd that go?***

Jonathan Davis: It was fuckin' killer; everyone showed up—like 500 kids. We did that, did the show—the show was incredible. Everything's been going great. Honestly. It's crazy, things are going good.

You're still doing that non-stop touring?

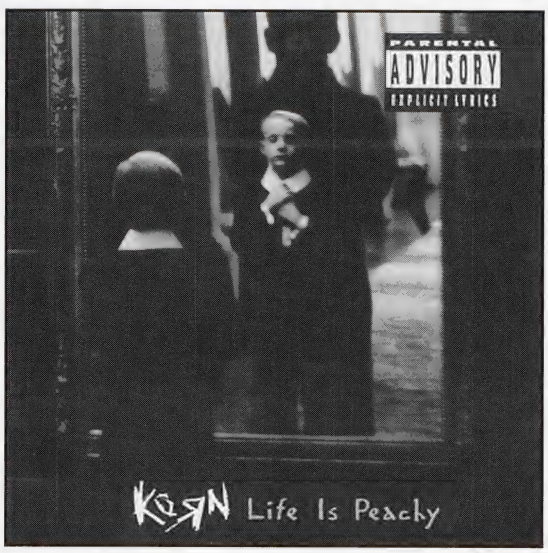
Yeah. We were actually home for like five months, but we were doing our album. I haven't been *really* home for, shit, a long time. I get to go home when I can and spend time with my kid; then I'm off again.

How has being a father changed your life?

It's made me wake up. It's done a lot for me. He saved my life; I was going off the deep end. I was such an alcoholic, and now I have someone that depends on me to live. It straightened me out a little bit. And I love the little shit, so I hope to make some money—let him have a good life, things I didn't have. That's the wish of any father, I guess.

Has, then, your outlook on the world changed, or has it just changed you as a person?

It has calmed me down a little bit. But, I still party and everything, and I still have a fucked up family; I'm not married. It changed me in that I'm going to take care of myself a little better.



[Your agent] told me your album was #3 last week—how does that feel?

That made me cry. It's like the biggest achievement you can do. It was the COUNTING CROWS, CELINE DION and then us! So, that's pretty cool.

What do you think that says about the music scene?

I think it says that we've got a lot of cool fucking fans. A lot of fans have been waiting a long time for this album. It went gold in a week—which kind of trips me out, too.

When you first started this band, did you ever expect to be sitting where you are today?

FUCK NO!

. . .Sponsored by Adidas and Jagermeister. . .

I had to drop the Jagermeister; I had to stop drinking that shit, it's fucking evil. But, I never thought anybody would get this band. We just did our shit, and then it started to take off. We started this new kind of music, this new style, I guess. I'm sort of in denial. I can't believe this is happening.

***Tell us about the upcoming tour with* METALLICA.**

That's gonna be pretty cool. I don't understand [their change]. They became soft. If they would've came out all fucking full-on hair, thrashing like they used to and did a typical METALLICA song—I don't want to say typical, but a METALLICA song—it would've been phat! All their fans would be so happy I haven't really talked to anyone that likes the new METALLICA. They're pretty old school, so it's going to be kind of trippy.

Where did the title for* Life is Peachy *come from?

It's because life isn't, but sometimes it is. It's just perfect. It came from our first album cover, actually, that we didn't get to use. The Pee-chee Corporation wouldn't let us use it—we had a Pee-chee folder on the cover. I used to write, "Life is peachy, but sex is an all-season sport." We were thinking of all the shit we used to do in high-school and that came up. We just meant it as a sarcastic comment; that's all it really means. We went through a few different album covers. I call this one our gothic cover.

What do you say at the beginning of "Twist"?

Not a damn thing. It's just my own form of heavy scat singing.

Even though you've been on the road for so long, do you still feel good about touring?

Oh, fuck yeah! I love touring, I love playing live shows. I mean, that's what **KORN**'s all about—our live shows. We've just got to do what we do. When I fucking fall over with a broken back, and we all have arthritis, I guess we'll hang it up [laughs]. But until then, we're going to be on the road.

Tell me about you Internet involvement.

Fuck, I'm fully into it. That's a way fans can get a hold of us. I'm on it every night. We've got a full web page going. People can hear voice-mail, they can hear stories on the road, download videos; you can download pretty much everything. We were the first to do an on-line concert. We've got like a half a million people logging on. It's cool. We're just using some of the technology available to us.[www.korn.com]

How does the rest of the band feel about the success?

They all love it. We're just one big happy family right now, just riding it out, just having fun. Playing music for people, that's what it's all about.

Errin Klein

epic IMMORTAL

Art of Unholy Metal

ABRUPTUM(swe) "Vi Sonus Veris Nigrae Malitiaes" digipack CD

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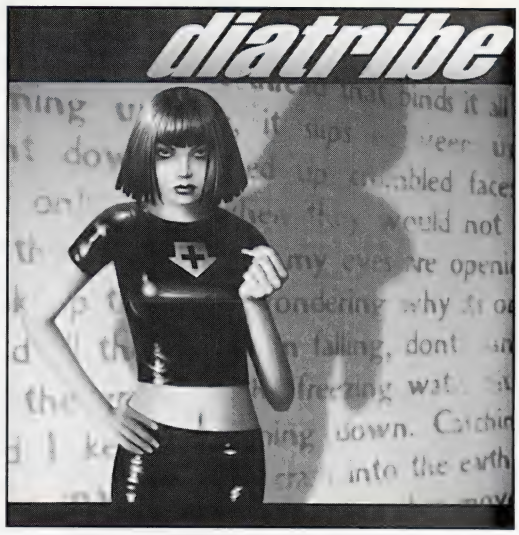

We live in an era where our attention is often only half focused. Bombarded with images, sound, and textures, we process in quantity, but not in quality. With this in mind, one truism holds firm: there are some people who won't listen until you get angry.

With pure sonic aggression filtered through haunting fretwork and coarse electronics, **DIATRIBE** is fusing intense passion with searing melodies. In short, **DIATRIBE** is getting angry, and people are listening.

Mark Jameson, **DIATRIBE**'s vocalist and founding member, chose the name 'diatribe'—meaning a forceful verbal attack—to embody his music's aggressive agenda. Confessing that the music is the main focus, their 'forceful attack' is not in **DIATRIBE**'s lyrics but in the sheer power of their sound. "Every kind of music has a voice in itself," Jameson stresses, "Every kind of music communicates an attitude."

Jameson conceived **DIATRIBE** in '90 with the intent of cross-breeding his two favorite genres: metal and electronic music. Since then, with guitarist Phil Biagini and bassist Kevin Marburg, **DIATRIBE** has released two EPs, toured with synthmetal favorites KMFDM, CHEMLAB, and SISTER MACHINE GUN on the Angstfest Tour, and had a track, "Therapy," appear in the movie *Strange Days*. Remarkably, **DIATRIBE**'s latest offering, a self titled LP on Re- Constriction/Cargo Records, is their first full length. "We've been around for so long," Jameson concedes, "but we've only scratched the surface."

Spanning the musical directions the band has traveled in the last six years, the LP is literally a chronicle of where **DIATRIBE** has been and where they are headed. Opening with "Sick The Dog," **DIATRIBE** sound seems deceptively subdued then unexpectedly kicking into a heatstroke of wavering rhythm and riffs. Vacillating between smooth, sultry beats and explosive attacks, "Sick The Dog" proves **DIATRIBE** embodies what makes metal/industrial crossover potent.

"The Son", with its hip-hop thumping, wailing chords, and sultry throatwork, is the catchiest of the collection. Jameson explains that "The Son" represents "the king of the junkyard leaving dad's kingdom to go out into the world to make one of his own; illusions of grandeur." He concedes that this could also be a metaphor for the meteoric rise and descent of a few bands currently in vogue. Unlike these bands, Jameson quickly adds, they have no illusions of grandeur: **DIATRIBE** has longevity and "is more than a fad chorus that wears off like a quick sugar fix, it has the depth and integrity to become a soundtrack for life."

An amalgamation of garage sensibilities and scrapyard rage, Jameson describes **DIATRIBE** as perfecting the "organic use of syncopated rhythmic technology combined with aggressive guitars." Due to its lack of categorization, one might think Jameson would worry that **DIATRIBE** will be misinterpreted. Struggling to escape the "industrial" music moniker and double edged sword of "underground" status, Jameson admits to not knowing whether **DIATRIBE** will rocket or remain stationary. However, his outlook is remarkably simple: "Hopefully the music will speak for itself," Jameson observes. And if it doesn't? He grins, "Then fuck everyone."

Sharon Maher

godheadSilo

What happens when happy pop melodies are thumped out by a grating bass guitar and a constant bludgeoning drum beat? Tweak the vocals to a distorted buzz and add plenty of hissing feedback. Pump the sound through a pile of amps without help from a single guitar and welcome to the wonderful noise of **GODHEADSILO**! This band from Olympia, WA consists of bassist/vocalist Mike Kunka and drummer Dan Haugh. Their latest effort on Sub Pop, *Skyward in Triumph*, is a sludge soaked rhythm arsenal with just enough upbeat silliness to amuse and confuse the listener.

Bassist Mike Kunka attempts to explain. "We had a guitar player for the first two months, but I don't think he liked practicing as much as we did. We would practice eight hours a day because we were learning our instruments and figuring out sounds. When we first started we were really into HAMMERHEAD, STEEL POLE BATHTUB and the MELVINS—the real heavy hitters of noise rock as far as I'm concerned." Kunka chuckles oddly and adds, "Once we actually figured out what we were doing and got rid of our guitar player we decided to have our own take on things. Right now our biggest influence is LED ZEPPELIN."

If you're starting to become slightly confused that's exactly how **GODHEADSILO** likes to keep you. A wide grin crawls up Mike's face and he continues in a much too serious tone. "Our drummer started out just hitting as hard as he could. Now, he's gotten technically proficient and can do complicated beats, but he still hits really hard. He listens to LED ZEPPELIN like crazy for inspiration. But, I don't think we're trying to become more accessible, just more listenable."

Kunka and Haugh started **GODHEADSILO** without any preconceived ideas. Mike says "It was like, 'Oh, I bought another cabinet for $50 bucks so let's stack it up!' Or, someone would say, 'I got this fucked up pedal, let's see what it does.' It was like figuring out all these things that only cost $50 could totally alter your sound. I finally got all of these big cabinets and a huge drum set. We wanted to bypass the PA all together, because sound guys really suck. Their like, 'Oh, its just bass and drums.'

"Right now I'm really getting back into heavy metal," Mike admits with a strange sense of proudness. "SEPULTURA is probably my favorite band. I also like NAILBOMB. But, for a while, I was just listening to the CARS for, like, six months straight. Our sound keeps evolving but we go out of our way not to say anything important lyrically. If I have a personal problem, I \tell my girlfriend; I don't need to tell the thousands of people we play to. They don't care. We're not trying to change the genre of noise rock; we're not really tough guys and we're not going to fake it. We're always jumping around and laughing all the time because it's fun. If rock and roll makes you that crabby then don't do it. If you're that bummed out with life just crash your car and get it over with. Don't tell me about it."

Chad Hensley

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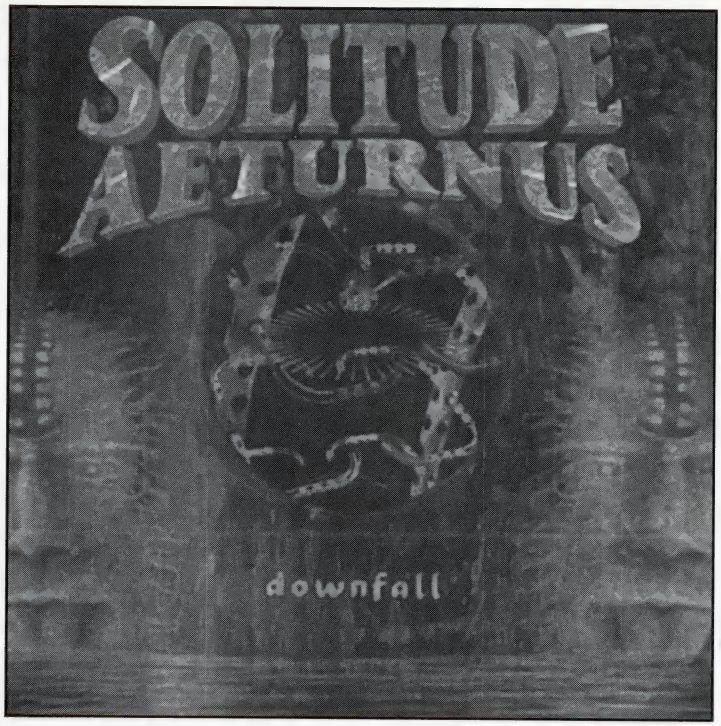


From the unlikely locale of Arlington, Texas, a melancholy voice is issuing forth a unique prophecy of doom. **SOLITUDE AETURNUS** is well known among doom fans as a classy, solid outfit with the twin assets of Robert Lowe's soaring, emotional voice and John Perez's keen ear for bleak, yet spirited, riffs (not to diminish the role of Edgar Rivera/guitars, Lyle Steadman/bass, and Wolf/drums). After two records on Roadrunner (*Into the Depths of Sorrow* and *Beyond the Crimson Horizon*) the band resurfaced on Pavement for *Through the Darkest Hour*, by far their finest work to date.

Now Pavement releases *Downfall*, the newest opus from the **SOLITUDE AETURNUS** camp. One listen is all it takes to reveal that, once again, **SOLITUDE AETURNUS** have delivered. I recently spoke to John Perez, and found him, like his music, to be refreshingly candid, honest and confident. He offered his thoughts on. . .

The new album: The production on the CD's not all that great. We're very happy with the disc in terms of the songs; I think these are some of the best we've ever written. I think the album as a whole is quite a bit different than anything we've done before, and we're quite satisfied with the direction we took. One thing that we, as a band, were not satisfied with was the production. It's not as good as the last album; it's not as heavy, and the sound was not as clear or clean. This was something that just got out of our control, and there was nothing we could do about it before the release date. We don't think it sucks—we just wish it could have sounded better. I don't think people will be disppointed; **SOLITUDE** fans will get into it, anyway.

Record labels: To me, labels are not that important. Roadrunner was good for what they did at the time, and Pavement is good, until they stop putting out our albums. It doesn't matter to me. We will continue to make this music and make it available to people as long as we see fit. Pavement could drop us tomorrow and we'd find a way to get it out there. There will be life in this band as long as we decide to keep it going.

The new songs: Every time we try to write music for another release, we're always thinking of how we want to do things differently. We wanted to come up with something pretty diverse, much more than we've ever tried before without straying too far from our core sound. We're very aware that you can easily fall into the trap of sounding the same each album. I try to be as unbiased about it as possible—to jump out of the band and look at us from an outsider's point of view—and I think we've been successful at making four different records that are pretty unique from each other.

The music we play in this band is exactly the kind of metal music we see fit to hear. It's not easy to write good songs, but we've never 'locked' ourselves into one style of writing or playing. There's a particular sound we have that's consistent, but we've always just done what we want to do. And we've never gotten tired of it, or bored with it. I don't feel we're stuck in a particular sound. Of course, we can't go out and do some punk rock thing or some thrash thing, because it wouldn't sound right within the band! If anybody wanted to do that, we would channel that energy into a side project. Which is exactly what has been done; I've done a solo album which will come out in a few weeks on my own label, BrainTicket Records. Lyle's doing the same thing right now with a hardcore punk band—instead of putting hardcore into **SOLITUDE**'s music, he goes off and does it elsewhere.

Brainticket Records: The label is going great. This is something I plan on doing full time for as long as I can. It's something I've focused my mind on, even though it's a lot of work, especially if you're a one or two-man operation. The first thing we put out was a collection of demos and an album from SORCERER, a band from Sweden. We just recently put out a band from San Antonio called LOS CRUCES. We have LIQUID SOUND COMPANY coming out, which is my album. It's not metal at all, so I don't know how it'll do, but we'll try it.

[Btrainticket] came out of the desire to make money! [laughs] That's partially true, making money within the music business is something I'd like to do, something I've never done. At the core of my decision, though, is that I'm totally immersed in music, in all forms. It's all I care about, I can't see myself doing anything else. So for me to be working with bands—pushing bands that I think are great, that I think people should hear—that's not a job. But it takes money, and hopefully we can make money doing it. I've been involved in the music business for fifteen years, and I'm not a fool. I know where the money goes now. It goes to labels. Having been on both sides of the fence, I know what bands would like to have and what they expect. I can be fair and completely honest with bands.

Touring with **MERCYFUL FATE:** We've known King for five or six years—of course, we've all been fans ever since the first MERCYFUL FATE EP. We got to know him a few years ago when he moved to this area. He came out to a few of our gigs, and we became friends. We asked him if we could tour with them. He agreed because he really likes our band, and it was a great tour—a dream come true. The band and their crew were great. I don't think there was one show where we didn't get an incredibly good response.

We're not gonna tour [for *Downfall*] unless we get one that's worth it. We're not gonna do a small tour that puts us into debt. There's nothin' better than playing live, hanging out with people who are into our music, kickin' back and drinkin' a beer or two with 'em—we love that. But, the reality is, you tend to lose a lot of money on tour. We're just into making the music and putting out the albums, that's our main thing. So, Pavement will probably drop us after we won't tour! [laughs]

The underground: My whole attitude has always been an underground one. I've been involved in metal since 1980, and I believe in the music. I believe in underground connections, a metal 'brotherhood', so to speak: musicians, people who buy records, people who make fanzines. It's all networking between people who love music. We have a lot of connections in the underground scene, and I like that. I think the underground is healthy, here and overseas. It's just the way we've done things; we take it upon ourselves to do our own work, and we work hard at what we do. We're very realistic about where we are and how much we can accomplish. In '83 I never thought SLAYER would be where they are today! Realistically, we'll achieve a certain amount of success and that's it.

Brainticket has procured some copies of the first two **SOLITUDE AETURNUS** records, which Roadrunner has seen fit to send out of print. Interested parties can write Brainticket at P.O. Box 122048, Arlington TX 76012 USA.

Keith Bergman

PAVEMENT MUSIC

Gene Simmons first described himself as the Doctor of Love in '76 for a KISS signature single that sold a mill. A decade later, CHEAP TRICK dropped rock and roll over the edge for the Doctor—a clanging tribute oddity that sold nil. Next came the Rev. Dr. Luv, co-founder and keyboardist of the **ELECTRIC HELLFIRE CLUB**. The Doc's rock road ended abruptly in '96 when he was killed in a car accident. Thomas Thorn, the late Doctor's partner in slime, delineates *Calling Dr. Luv*, the **EHC** eulogy to Shane Lassen, a.k.a the PhD of Love.

"I dubbed him the Rev. Dr. Luv when we were dropping acid and into psychedelic stuff. He was equally inspired by the KISS song and the muppet band, Dr. Teeth and the Electric Band. We joked about doing the song with Shane singing, so after his death it seemed the appropriate epitaph. I was in the KISS army back in the good old days.

"I had pictures of Gene, Paul, Ace and Peter in my locker and big farm boys would come by and spit on me for liking KISS. I wasn't big enough to stand up to these guys, but at the same time I wasn't tearing the pictures out of my locker. I took spit for KISS.

"AC/DC was also a big influence. And I was strongly into punk rock from a couple different standpoints: first, the RAMONES and the SEX PISTOLS, then the whole hardcore thing. I listened to goth rock about the time BAUHAUS was buzzing. From there I was immersed in the true industrial stuff like THROBBING GRISTLE and SPK, and I got into really harsh power electronics like WHITEHOUSE. At this time I got involved with the THRILL KILL KULT—a jump from what I had been doing to something that was basically a disco project. But, TKK had a good effect on me—opening me to different stuff.

"Shane was a fan of THRILL KILL KULT. I started talking to him and we just started hanging out, 'cause we were both from Wisconsin. I was helping him learn how to use some equipment he purchased and we ended up starting a band together.

"Some inspiration: reading, the 'X Files', old cheese movies late at night and standard things along the lines of *Clockwork Orange* or *Rosemary's Baby*. I enjoyed *Natural Born Killers*. I just picked up the director's cut with all the out takes, like Ashley Judd stabbed to death with a pencil. I wish the movie had been released as such. I get into kitschy horror and older movies. There's not one genre I'm locked into, or any time period or style. I like Stanley Kubrick and Ken Russell. His movie, *Devils*, was a great inspiration to me.

"Our greatest fan base is America's heartland—those weird little places that nobody bothers to play, like Cincinnati Ohio, or Huntington, West Virginia. I like Atlanta 'cause the kids go crazy there and start fires. There's a reference to that in 'Book of Lies' on our new album. At our last show in Portland, a bunch of fights broke out and the bouncer kicked out our friends who were defending the stage. I slagged the bouncer between songs and he challenged me, so we went at it on the dance floor. **EHC**'s live show incites everything from some sort of violent episode to people having sex on the edge of the stage.

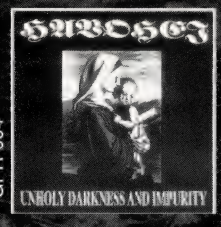
"*Calling Dr. Luv* is the closest we've come to realizing our sound. I don't even like being in the studio. I like playing music but dislike many things that go along with it. I was especially happy with the way 'He Who Holds the Lightning Rod', 'Hellflower' and the KISS cover came out. The Shane sample at the end of the title track is perfectly eerie. There are a lot of the darker elements like drugs, death and the devil in the DOORS, IRON BUTTERFLY or STRAWBERRY ALARM CLOCK; The DOORS don't really have a reputation as being a dark band, but back in the '60s people considered them morbid. Manzarek was obviously a very accomplished keyboard player, so I think for a technical magazine like *Keyboard* to compare Shane's playing to Ray's was certainly a compliment."

Stone

GRINDING PEACE RECORDS

Malicious Hate
"In the Name of Hate" CD
$10 US/$12 World
Unbelievably fast and raging hate-filled grind with realist views. Great production and packaging. Witness pure destruction!
T-Shirts featuring a 3-color print of the cover on the front and 1-color photo on the back on a black tee. $15 US/$17 World.
GPR-003: Malicious Hate "Bring Forth Hate" MC - $4 US/$5 World. Features earlier recording of 3 CD trax and Napalm Death's The Kill (live).

Summon
"Dark Descent of Fallen Souls" CD
$12 US/$14 World
From the depths of Michigan comes Summon, fiery occultic grinding blackmetal with ex-members of Masochist, this band has been true to the scene since the early 90's. Support only true blackness!



Havohej
Unholy Darkness & Impurity 7" EP
$4 US/$5 World
Unbelievably deep and dark black metal with ex-Profanatica members, this is the band's greatest release of total darkness!

Memorium/Symphony of Grief Split 7" - $5 US/$6 World. Limited to a 500 swirled wax edition. Memorium plays extreme psychedelic 'shroom-induced doom. SoG is dredging and sludging doom. "A must for all doom fans." - Bob/Worm Gear Magazine.

GPR-003: Malicious Hate "Bring Forth Hate" MC - $4 US/$5 World. Features earlier recording of 3 CD trax and Napalm Death's The Kill (live).

GPR-006: Summon "Fire Turns Everything Black MC $5 US/$6 World. Promo to CD - a different recording with 3 different songs.

ORDERING INFO: Make money orders payable to: Duane Keith II/or conceal cash. Send certified mail (an additional $1 at the Post Office). All orders shipped in 24 hours. Send one US stamp for distribution list (free with order). Labels/Distributors/Stores: Please contact us for major wholesale list.

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http://www.deathmetal.com/grinding/

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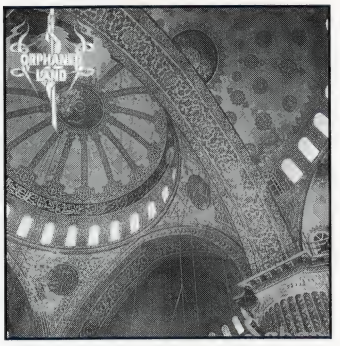
MUSIC REVIEWS

MARDUK

Glorification
Osmose Productions

Let's begin at the end. You will either own this weapon of Satanic warfare, or be a fucking spineless Christian skewered on Satan's sword! If *Heaven Shall Burn. . . When We are Gathered* put them on top of the black metal world, *Glorification* just sent them into the universe of legends. The unyielding energy MARDUK pours into these four cover tracks makes each scream bloody murder. I confess that DESTRUCTION's "Total Disaster" never ripped my fucking face off like it does now! The hellish carnage of the guitars and drums lay waste while bassist B War's cannonball tone crushes the remains to dust. That's why his bass only requires four tuning keys—each spells out H-E-L-L. PILEDRIVER's "Sex With Satan" and "Sodomize the Dead" had me screaming at the top of my lungs! "Spread your legs and scream. Now this is not a dream!" With what little sanity is left, vocalist Legion strips and rapes with his barbed tongue and unholy mood. When *Glorification* enters my CD player, I bolt my doors for good reason. All normal people's souls would be taken hostage and nobody would get out alive. That makes MARDUK dangerous. *Glorification* is your one way ticket to Hell.

Kurt Hubert



ORPHANED LAND
El Norra Alila
Holy Records

It's difficult to put an apt description on ORPHANED LAND's music, as it seems that they combine the Spanish Saltarello singing and musical style with heavy doom/death. It's a strange combination but somewhat fascinating, the only thing to say about it is that their music is totally original. Songs like "Find Yourself, Discover God" and "The Path Ahead, A Never Ending Way," included with other tracks titled in what must be Spanish, such as; "Shir Hama'alot" and "El Meod Na'ala" create a mood that left me unsure as to whether I just liked the album, or loved it. If you've got the chance to listen to it thoroughly, do so. It might be a forerunner of the next generation of doom that relies upon folk/cultural roots in music.

Athair

ASGAROTH
The Quest for Eldenhor
New Gotia / Requiem Records

Spanish black metal that seems to be based on a fictional theme, with song titles like, "Legends of the Great Magic War", "The Freezing Winds of Kiljaarn", "The Last Battle (Tower of Doom)", "Soul Screams" and "The Return of the Hero". The last two are instrumentals and don't sound too bad, though "The Return of the Hero" does have a spoken part where the speaker doesn't quite flow with the song. ASGAROTH consists of three members: Lord Lupus, bassist and vocalist; Mythral, the guitarist and keyboardist and E. Cabral, the drum programmer. *The Quest for Eldenhor* has pretty good production (Lord Lupus' vocals are a little irritating sometimes), but would definitely sound much better with a real drummer. Not the worst album to add to your black metal collection.

Athair

VOMITORY
Raped in Their Own Blood
Fadeless Records

Swedish death metal continues to rage in skullcrushing fashion in this five pieces' debut. Great production, decent songwriting and blast beating riffs of rage highlight this disc. VADER fans who can imagine *The Ultimate Incantation* with a Swedish tonal base should take particular interest.

Fadeless Records, PO Box 482, 5800 AL Venray, The Netherlands

Kurt Hubert

CRADLE OF FILTH
Dusk and Her Embrace
Music For Nations

Right now, I'm telling you, this is their best release. They've cut down on all the fanfare, and the stuff that was silly at times, and produced an album of sick Vampiric black metal. The female vocals remain, the screeches of Dani are better than ever, and the music is the best it has ever been. I must also add that the poetry herein is comparable to a sonnet possessed. Hey, there's no naked Vampire girls on the cover! That would be the only improvement, to a much improved effort.

Joker

PROFANUM
Flowers of our Black Misanthropy
Astral Wings Records

Black metal isn't known for possessing the best musicians or song writers, but Poland's PROFANUM may prove this wrong. Great emotional acoustic guitar lines and advanced song writing highlight this disc. Vocally, lyrically and musically, PROFANUM are highly atmospheric without suffering from minimal talent. Mid-paced black metal with the heartfelt blasphemy I enjoy so well.

Astral Wings Records, Toporowskiego 81/55, 25-549 Kielce, Poland.

Kurt Hubert

EINHERJER
Aurora Borealis
Warmegeddon Productions

EINHERJER is exactly the kind of Nordic black metal that I have been searching for. They weave a brilliant sound, and spin tales that have inspiring rhythm. EINHERJER reminds me of some of the few black/death bands that use very heavy groove riffs, along with some remarkable melodic parts that get the blood running hot with the desire to do battle. *Aurora Borealis* is a four song EP, and a full-length album is hopefully in the future. I will be earnestly waiting for another batch of original evils from these skalds of Nordic doom.

Athair

ARGENTUM
Ad Interitum Funebrarum
Fullmoon Productions

Being in a music scene that offers such a wide variety of styles and sounds allows you to find quality material in just about any form you prefer. And for those of us whose mutated souls bleed the black blood of the bitter cold comes this talented five piece from Mexico. Gloomy black metal at it's finest, ARGENTUM has real depth and musical content. The way they combine mystical keyboard effects with a true-to-style six-string blur and high pitched vocals could singe the cancerous pours on your decaying head. Up to par percussion and production adds the last elements to this well-rounded release from Mexico's darkest band. Come sleep with the dead in caskets of ice and smeg. Starve your god while feasting upon *Ad Interitum Funebrarum.*

Brad Cooper

SCHEITUD
Traveling in Ancient Times
Invasion Records

A furious blast of German black/death metal that certainly rivals all others in the genre. From the very first hyper deliverance, "October Journey" to other tracks, such as 'Autumn Departure", "Riding the Icewinds" and "December at Fullmoon", SCHEITUD display a clear mastery over the skill needed to play at blazing speed. The sound is crisp, clearly showing that more and more bands like SCHEITUD are getting the recording quality they deserve. When I go forth to battle versus the weak-willed, I will travel in the lands of ancient times and hear the hate-filled pulse of SCHEITUD thundering in my brain. These warriors are true to the artistry that lies deep in the heart of those who truthfully follow the black.

Athair

THE FLESH
Storming the Heaven's Gates
Arctic Serenades

It's only once in a while that an album causes such a reaction in me, and THE FLESH certainly showed me their ability to surprise the senses. Deep death vocals mixed with black metal screeches made my skin tear open and cry like a dying child, and the music was delightfully reminiscent of older doom bands and death metal classics, but with THE FLESH's own little unique twists. This LP has only four songs, and it left me wanting to hear more. My personal favorite is "Last Day of Your Life", an eleven minute trip into the sheer weight of reality. Overall it has a great production and I recommend it for anyone who enjoys doom, death or black metal. I cannot wait for another album from these newly born souls of misery.

Athair

The Jester Race
Nuclear Blast America

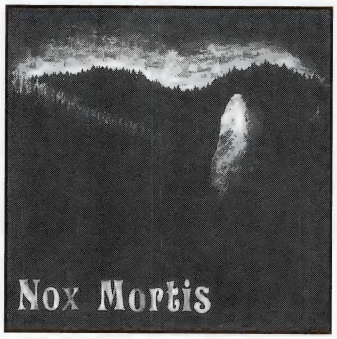
This is the latest in a string of great recordings by this Swedish folk metal group. Technical death blended with folk melodies make for music that keeps you wondering what the next riff will sound like. All the songs on this album are quite impressive and never boring, with the exception of "Wayfarer", which I found to sound too much like a Satriani tune. This is a superb pick up if you're into progressive death, or AT THE GATES-style music. IN FLAMES is a band that won't let you down.

Joker

ANGEL CORPSE
Hammer of Gods
Osmose Productions

ANGEL CORPSE is another damnable black metal band from the infamous Osmose Productions. They certainly live up to the reputation that all OP bands possess: speed like an angel with their ass on fire, vocals like the destructive winds of the worst storms, and that attitude of we-won't-stop-torturing-you-until-you-scream! From the very first explosion of guitars and drums, ANGEL CORPSE demands your undivided attention, and you give it willingly, like the godwhore you are. Get this album and check it out yourself, that's all that can be said.

Athair

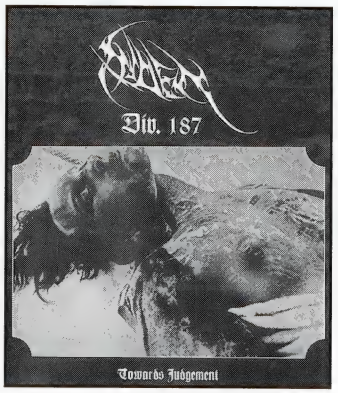


NOX MORTIS
Nox Mortis
Prophecy Productions

A death album that uses an ambient/gothic-like sound. The overall effect of strangeness was further enhanced by the frequent monologues in German, of which I understood nothing. Not a bad album if you like this kind of sound, but I just couldn't get into it. "Choirs in Trance" was an interesting track of ghostly female vocals and demonic whispers. This track was the only redeeming song to my ears, as it's well-executed structure was broken by some faster eruptions of sound that put it back into my doom/black/death preferred style.

NOX MORTIS: c/o Jan Vincent Simmen, Am Monchhof 18, 99891 Tabarz, Germany.

Athair



NIDEN DIV. 187
Towards Judgement
Necropolis Records

In their defiance of "the pretentious attitudes" associated with black metal, this three piece unleash four tracks of viciously intense metal mayhem. "Black Water" and "A View in the Mirror Black" are as raw, straightforward and violent as Henke's high pitched snarls are in attacking the listener. This is a great EP! NIDEN DIV. 187 wouldn't give a fuck if I hated it anyway.

Necropolis Records, PO Box 14815, Fremont, CA. 94539-4815, USA.

Kurt Hubert

THE MIST
Gottverlassen
Repulse Records

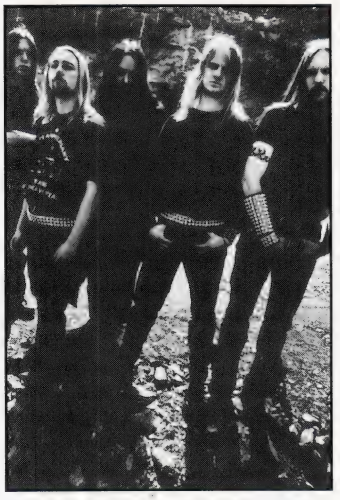
Popular Brazilian metal music usually comes in the form of SEPULTURA or OVERDOSE. That hard rock/metal that's heavy enough for METALLICA and PANTERA fans to headbang without scaring the shit out of them like MORTICIAN or MARDUK. THE MIST is everything I hate about commercialized bouncy metal and everything the aforementioned fans of this style love. Going any further than mentioning the very same Jairo Guedz who performed on SEPULTURA's *Bestial Devastation* and *Morbid Visions* is in this band would be pointless. You kids have yet another band to listen to while skateboarding. I'd rather puke and roll in it than let this finish in my CD player.

Kurt Hubert

GODGORY
Sea of Dreams
Invasion Records

To fully experience this band try envisioning yourself in a lavish part of the Swedish mountains in a small remote village, fresh snow on jagged peaks, crashing cymbals atop devastating grooves. This is a band with a unique side. Acoustically dominated. Melody amongst death. Depressive lyrics in a just-have-to-listen-to kind of vocal sound. Twist this all together with the raw edge of modern-mosh-metal and you have something worthy of the top shelf of many doom collections. Breathe them in or succumb to the sea!

Brad Cooper



A CANOROUS QUINTET
Silence of the World Beyond
No Fashion Records

Melodic Swedish black/death metal is not only a rarity, it lacks the powerful delivery of their rawer, primitive allies. Unlike the norm, these Swedes are full-blown power death metal. "The Orchid's Sleep" and "The Black Spiral" have awesome hook and tempo changes. Although I normally thrive on primitive brutality, A CANOROUS QUINTET's musical superiority and talent are quite impressive.

No Fashion Records, PO Box 2140, 103 14 Stockholm, Sweden.

Kurt Hubert

TRITITIA
Crucidiction
Holy Records

Unlike fellow labelmates SERENITY, this trio steers clear of cloning ST. VITUS and INTERNAL VOID. In fact, while a tinge of VITUS was clearly expected, TRITITIA's contrasting vocal styles completely threw me off guard. Bouncing between clearly enunciated lyrics and black metal growling, you would be hard pressed to think a typical BLACK SABBATH style doom band would even think about trying this. Musically, I hear everything from Jimmy Page's harmonies to CANDLEMASS's lead stomping throughout this album. Definitely not typical doom and a band fan's of such sloth chord strumming will not soon forget.

Holy Records, BP-59, 77260 La Ferte Sous Jouarre, France.

Kurt Hubert

ARCANA
Dark Age of Reason
Cold Meat Industry

The moody, symphonic soundtrack music of ARCANA is a hypnotic, alluring spell that had me drooling down my shirt. *Dark Age of Reason* transported my soul to another dimension in much the same respect the *Damien: Omen II* and *Conan the Barbarian* soundtracks do under the right influence. The somber, instrumental passages carry vocalist Ida Bengtsson's beautiful, harmonious voice far and beyond the physical realm. Her presence floats like a whispered melody in ARCANA's musical autumn breeze. This is a bold step forward for the Karmanik family. I love this!

Cold Meat Industry, PO Box 1881, 581 17 Linkoping, Sweden. Fax: 46 13 10 39 06.

Kurt Hubert

MASONNA
Hyper Chaotic
V. Records

Extreme Harshtronics and Exclamations from the Japanese Noise God! All my friends hate this stuff, but in my opinion, MASONNA is the undisputed 'King of Noise'. With his latest release, he backs me up. *Hyper Chaotic* is just that, an unrelenting stream of white noise blasts, shifting and melding with frequency disruptions, all feeding back into your nervous system. And what is he ranting about? This man's pissed! This is the shit that the noise scene is all about. If you dare delve into this most extreme art form, MASONNA is the sound sculptor you want to hear. You cannot be prepared for what you'll experience.

Joker

EMBRACING
I Bear the Burden of Time
Invasion Records

At the time I came across EMBRACING I was looking for a band of total darkness. One you listen to *I Bear the Burden of Time* and the meaning of night is becomes clear! "Shapeless", "My Dragonbanner" and "They Seldom Return" are just a few of the ten tracks on this coveted LP. After coming to the conclusion that Mattias Holmgren is one of the most intense drummer/keyboardist/vocalist to ever infect a studio, I was once again forced into the fire by the two stringed demons who flow like a stale wind across a field of fallen angels. This release has rhythms to make you feel as if you were marching to battle with the German army of World War II, as well as painfully wretched vocals and acoustic fills to compliment the brutality. A must for any seeker of majestic music. EMBRACING is pointing the way to the future of black metal.

Brad Cooper

DEAD WORLD
Thanatos Descends
Malsonus Records

The Machine's excellence advanced DEAD WORLD's mechanized sonic impact from an aggressive *Collusion* to a human-hunting predator. Sole survivor Jon Canady retained all of *The Machine*'s bludgeoning heaviness, but stripped the material down to a rawer, primitive form. These bludgeoning industrialized tracks are complemented by more sinister noise-scapes delving even further into obscurity. Guitarist Kevin Kopp's razor rich lead input and harmonics are sorely missed this time, which truly accentuated the impact of *The Machine*'s material. Your skull deserves to be thrown on the pile this time. Excellent!

Malsonus: PO Box 18193, Denver, CO. 80218, USA. Included SASE or IRC for info.

Kurt Hubert

GROTESQUE
In the Embrace of Evil
Black Sun Records

Outside of SUPPARATION's *The Cube* release, this is absolutely the most beautifully printed digipak I've seen to date. In fact, if GROTESQUE rose at the same time as DESTRUCTION and DARK ANGEL, they may very well have ruled the '80s underground metal scene. These guys took the buzzing riffing of thrash, made it heavier and sicker like modern black metal, allowed guitarist Necrolord to incorporate some halfway decent leadwork and spawned *In the Embrace of Evil*. Although tracks like "Thirteen Bells of Doom" cover a variety of tempo changes, this album is basically very fast riffing and drums laid over a coffin of gutwrenching vocals. Good stuff to provoke the evil in all of us.

Black Sun Records, Box 129, 401 22 Goteborg, Sweden.

Kurt Hubert

DECAYED

Resurrectionem Morruorum

Skyfall Records

In Portugal, there is now an eighth gate to Hell that DECAYED personally dug, then forged the lock and key themselves. The dark, spooky intro "Into Depths" leaves little to the imagination of what this CD is all about, if you've ever heard BATHORY's *Under the Sign of the Black Mark*. When "Darkness Falls" starts, all hell breaks loose like old BELIAL or ARCHGOAT. Unlike these bands, the vocals sound like an incarcerated demon screaming for release. With songs like "Archdemon" and "Fuck Your God!", a layout that makes *At War With Satan* look friendly, and enough noisy, hellish blasphemy to kill a Vatican of Popes, what the fuck more would you need if you hate Christianity and like brutal metal? Not a fucking thing except this CD in your collection.

SkyFall Records, Rua Alfredo Guisado, no 10-3o, 1500 Lisboa, Portugal.

Kurt Hubert

MARY'S WINDOW

Whore

Slipside Records

When I first heard this band described as "sort of SMASHING PUMPKINS meets MARILYN MANSON," I thought, how? And then I thought, why? But, after listening to *Whore*, it really does sound like Gish-era SMASHING PUMPKINS with MARILYN MANSON overtones. The guitars are full-on, heavy rock n roll, while the vocals are harsh, distorted and outright mean. The trio hails from Chicago, and the album was produced by MINISTRY programmer H. Beno. I recommend you take a listen to *Whore*, despite what you may think of the ill-labeled comparison.

Errin Klein

HELL-BORN

Pagan Records

A blasting deluge of Satanic death from Poland. From the intro, all the way through the album, HELL-BORN exudes an aura of impenetrable darkness, with sounds that show a sublime control over their own black hearts' desires. This debut album is one that you should definitely include in your own library of evil. One thing that entranced me about HELL-BORN is that the vocals didn't sound as much like simple lyrical placement as they did the intonations of some dark, vile ritual.

Athair

SOLDNERGEIST

Spur 2

Glasnost Records

This German outfit rules a warped, mesmerizing realm of dark death noise and nightmarish hymnal agony. *Spur 2* covers large territories ranging from sublime, nocturnal rumbling to harsher, grating vollies. Ultimately, the listener becomes enveloped and attacked in a fog laden death climate. In capturing the fearful sensation human's experience in the final seconds before physical death, *Spur 2* repeatedly replicates this inevitable certainty throughout the presentation. Highly recommended!

Art Konkret, c/o M. Kropfreiter, Linkenheimerweg 5, 76649 Bruchsal, Germany.

Kurt Hubert

LUX OCCULTA

Forever Alone. Immortal

Pagan Records

Think of LUX OCCULTA as being a bittersweet combination between heart-shredding doom and the searing flames of the shrieking black metal sacrament. The use of synthesizers was definitely a boon to the feeling on this album; haunting melodies on the song "The Kingdom is Mine" and the lullaby-like intro to "Homodeus", to the battlefield rhythm at the beginning of "Sweetest Stench of the Dead." Musically, they remind me of NIGHTFALL, with that same degree of power mixed with a symphonic delivery that leaves me wanting eternal surcease from life and memory. "The Bitter Taste of Victory", the last track, fell like a blood-sodden angel, full of mournful cries and screams and ended with what sounds like a gun shot.

Athair

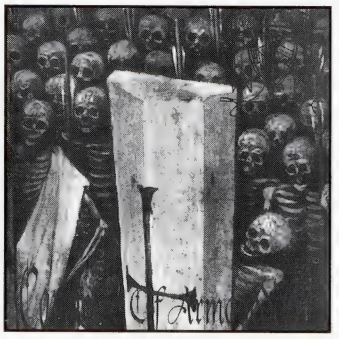
BORKNAGAR

Borknagar

Malicious Records

Symphonic pagan war metal cast forth from yet another Norwegian black metal super group. Damn, I love these projects that are popping up these days. This one includes members of ENSLAVED, ULVER, and GORGOROTH. The finished product is almost a literal mixture of these great bands, but with more classical atmospheres. It has a Wagner-esque appeal to it, like battle music. Very aggressive, yet still quite a bit folky as well. Dark and beautiful, I expected nothing less from this band of black metal's best.

Joker



LORDES WERRE

Canticles of Armageddon

R.I.P. Music

From the hellborn lands of our own USA comes LORDES WERRE, dark and burning with the essence of blackness. *Canticles of Armageddon* is a rare delight of American metal; oftentimes full of speed, and always heavy and eternally bent on delivering evil to your awaiting soul. The first song, "Chaotic Entirety" enters with an intro reminiscent of older bands, showing that while deeply rooted in the fine traditions of death/black LORDES WERRE moves ever-onward to their own blasted and wasted landscape. "Stellar Gateway" is a sci-fi horror that I found to be heavy as shit, with slower riffs compounded with that trademark high chord strumming style used by black metal bands. This album's instrumental, "Chant of Making", while short, is a good example of LW's grasp of the epic (evil?) metal sound.

The final two songs are my personal favorites: "Grendel" is a tale well done that is based on the BEOWULF story, and "When the Stars Turn Black" just struck some element within me and I found myself wanting to slip this CD into the portable player and kick the shit out of some poor Christian on the street.

LORDES WERRE: c/o Avernus, Po Box 296, Elkhart IN 46515, USA.

Athair

CATASEXUAL URGE MOTIVATION

The Encyclopedia Of Serial Murders

Deliria Productions

Japanese Cyber Grind Gore. I thought CUM's demo was killer, but this is the shit! Nonstop drum machine fueled grindcore that'll no doubt make you start listening to the neighbors dog telling you to kill your parents. The vocals are belched so low that it's almost hypnotic. If you bow to chaotic blast, you will kneel at the altar of CUM! The demo was only a teaser compared to the variety of crushers they've got here! Twenty two tracks. . . think you can hang?

Joker

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UNDERGROUND CONNECTION

This is a list of underground bands that have stuff available. Write to them for ordering information.

ATTENTION BANDS!

Send a sample of your release to:Pit Magazine / Attn: Underground Connection PO Box 9545 / Colorado Springs CO 80932

ANTISOCIAL
4861 Major Dr
New Orleans LA 70128
C: *Disassociation* -- 2 Songs

BLOODSTORM
Chris Gamble
2756 Pratt St
Philadelphia PA 19137
C: *Death By The Storm Wizard*
6 Songs

COLEMESIS
Joan Jend
4742 Shadow Ridge Ct
Castlerock CO 80104
C: *Still Oppression Rules* -- 15 Songs

DEADEN
Von Young
1917 C Melrose Dr
Champaign IL 61820
C: *Feast On The Flesh Of The Dead*
6 Songs

DEITIES
Po Box 5465
Pleasanton CA 94566
D: *Icon* -- 6 Songs

DETESTATION
Tommy Rapisardi
237 Cagua Ne
Albuquerque NM 87108
D: *Massacre Of Hate* -- 7 Songs

DIM MAK
94 D Throckmorton Ave
Red Bank NJ 07701
C: *Dim Mak* -- 4 Songs

DISCIPLE
Jeff Lenormand
322 Genevieve
Pacifica CA 94044
D: *Splinter In The Minds Eye*
15 Songs

DISMEMBERED FETUS
Po Box 9450
Denver CO 80209
D: *Generation Of Hate* -- 31 Songs

DOMINION
Bill Hedal
1600 143rd St W #123
Burnsville MN 55306

DRUDGERY
311 Newton
Denver CO 80219
D: *Strength Beyond The Pain* -- 4 Songs

FALL
Po Box 1683
Sioux Falls SD 57101
D: *Vigorous Repercussions From*
10 Songs

THE FLY BITCHES
2809 Hillsborough Rd
Durham NC 27705

GORGASM
1314 Lathrap Ave
River Forest IL 60305

HUMAN SECTOR
Ropin St 5 Kiriat Nordo
42347 NE Tanya Israel
C: 7 Songs

IMMORTAL DOMINION
Stephen Sherwood
3021 E Mulberry C
Ft Collins CO 80526
D: *Birth* -- 5 Songs

IMPALER
1252 B Dunberry Ln
Eagan MN 55123
D: *Undead Things* -- 12 Songs

INFAMY
Josh Heatley
3145 Sheffield Ave
Los Angeles CA 90032

JAWW
1576 Queen St W #30
Toronto Ontario Canada M6R 1A6
D: *South Bound* -- 10 Songs

MASSACRATION
Jeff Stevens
191 S Windsor Dr
Denver CO 80219
C: 5 Songs

NERFARION
Chuck Crews
2876 Sans Pareil St
Jacksonville FL 32246
C: *Self Immolation For Daemonic. . .*
8 Songs

NEVER
Robert Stamper
5400 N Mayo Tr
Pikeville KY 41501
D: *Neverland* -- 10 Songs

ORDERED CHAOS
4801 New York Ave
Cypress CA 90630
C: *Doomed* -- 9 Songs

PENALTY
221 Smilax Rd #147
Vista CA 92083
C: *Suffer* -- 9 Songs

POPE ON A STICK
114 B Colorado Ave
Pueblo CO 81004
D: *Tales Of Love And Other Traged*
13 Songs

POSSESSION
Mike Vinson
1703 N Ridgeview #300
Olath KS 66061
D: *Eternally Haunt* -- 10 Songs

REGURGITATION
Ben Deskins
Po Box 366
Washington Ch OH 43160
C: *Conceived Through Vomit* 5 Songs

REQUIEM
1200 N Lamb #36
Las Vegas NV 89110
C: 3 Songs

REQUIEM
Po Box 560971
Miami FL 33256-0971
C: *A Brief Moment In Death*
6 Songs

SADISTIC TORMENT
John Voyles
3106 Tinder Pl
Bowie MD 20715-3147
C: *Unearthly Horrors* -- 5 Songs

SEDUCER
Tripp Mcneill
5108-D Cherry Crest Ln
Charlotte NC 28217
D: *Sin Speaks* -- 9 Songs

SICKLE CELL
115 N Purdy
Lyons KS 67554
C: *Souls Departed* -- 6 Songs

SKINNED
Travis Weikum
1545 Deanna Ct
Loveland CO 80534
C: 6 Songs

STRUCTURE
3721 W Cambridge Ste 17
Phoenix AZ 85009
D: *Bear Arms* -- 6 Songs

TRIBULATION
17098 Main St
Hesperia CA 92345

UMBILICAL STRANGULATION
Chris Michels
944 Oaks Dr
Franklin Sq NY 11010
C: *Disruptive Abortion* -- 5 Songs

VOLATILE
Po Box 5320
2140 Homebush South New
Australia
D: *Quarantine* -- 8 Songs

This is a list of foreign record labels that specialize in black/death metal. Write for information on ordering, please include two IRC's for a reply. Make sure to mention PIT MAGAZINE!

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Po Box 532
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BLACK DRAGON RECORDS
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Paris France 75008

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231 Portobello Rd
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07179297911

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London England W9 3QP
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CARRION RECORDS
Mariusz Kmiolek
Box 50
Legionowo 5 Poland 05 119

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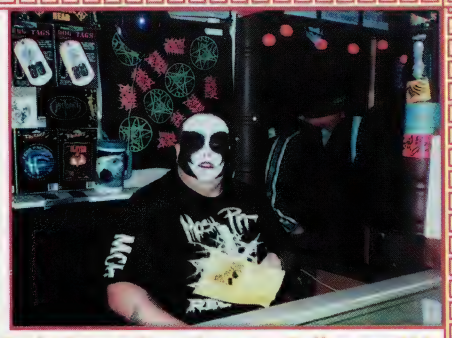

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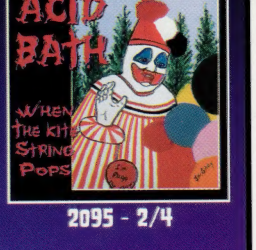

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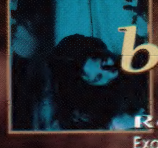

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Before I jump into the reviews of 'zines from around the world, I'd like to give a quick background on myself to avoid confusion and disillusion on the part of you faithful readers. I've been writing about music for various publications for about two years, but death metal and hardcore have never been my area of expertise. I have been interested in the genre and have been slightly immersed into the scene, but my ignorance may shine through in these reviews. I apologize beforehand if I come across as a bit uninformed about the overall scene, the bands, and the underground lifestyle, but I'm sure by reading these different mags I'll soon become a proficient master of metal. Cool, now with the disclaimer out of the way, on to the substance.

Grimmoires Magazine #11 & #15 ($2 Worldwide 3901 Prairie Lane Austin, TX 78728 USA). I'm not real sure what the intention of this magazine is, but it appears that it's only purpose is as an Austin scene 'zine. The first issue, #11, features interviews with IMMOLATION and CANNIBAL CORPSE, both pretty cool, plus a review of MORTALITY's demo, *Death Grooves*, but the rest of the magazine is devoted to bands like THE BLUE MEANIES, PAN THY MONIUM, and MR. BIG? (I thought those guys would be dead by now). Issue #15 is completely devoid of any death, grind, or metal of any kind unless you count Y & T or KISS as one of your favorite metal bands. It seems that their intention may be to provide more info on the underground scene but they either lack the resources, or are more illiterate about this music than I am. However, I will give high props to the overall look and feel of the mag. The difference between issue #11 and #15 is like night and day with the layout, design, writing, and overall content. If you live in or around Austin, you might wanna pick this one up, but for the rest of us there is very little in this 'zine that we can't get somewhere else.

A View Into The Abyss #6 (8081 S. Madison Ave. Ste. 360, Indianapolis, IN, 46227-6001, USA) is primarily a tribute mag to Northern European black metal and death bands. This issue featured NAGFLAR, IN FLAMES, ABLAZE MY SORROW, and many others. Every single profile was an interview and almost every band was asked the exact same questions in the exact same order,but the overall content is pretty good. Fortunately the interviewing is somewhat vague and allowed the bands to answer similar questions in very different ways. The editing is, honestly, crap. Too many misspellings, bad grammar, and horrible structure make this 'zine very difficult to read, but if you want some insight into somewhat unknown black metal bands, this would be the place to get it. As a special bonus, there is a listing of various CD's, and where you can get them, from some of the most underground bands in black metal.

The strangest magazine I've ever seen would have to be ***The Narrow Path #8*** ($2 US $3 Elsewhere P.O. Box 532, Pueblo, CO 81002, USA). This 'zine is dedicated to the high and holy principles of Jesus Christ, through metal music. Seems like an odd companionship to me, but I guess I learn something new everyday. Completing my overwhelming confusion was an interview with George Fisher from CANNIBAL CORPSE giving his take on life, death, religion, etc. and then at the end it seems that the writer is attempting to convert "Corpsegrinder" to Christianity. Very, very weird. Other reasonably well known secular acts profiled included THE GALACTIC COWBOYS and TROUBLE, plus plenty of info on Christian death metal and hardcore bands THE MOSHKETEERS (cool name), SLAMCAT, and AETURNUS (which, incidentally was also the name of a band reviewed in the last 'zine, but they are Norwegian black metal, not Christian death metal) And if all this wasn't enough, there is plenty of scripture throughout, some with poignant interpretation to help the reader along. I know it sounds like I'm making this up, but I'm totally serious, this is a real magazine. I would recommend this 'zine as just an oddity, but these guys also have a listing of at least twelve other mags dedicated to the same values. Well, if you're looking for meaning and purpose in your life, maybe you can find God within Death Metal. There are much worse things in the world.

For straight edge, hardcore, punk fans out there you may try to find a copy of ***Worth #2*** (there is no address listed but I'm pretty sure the guys who put it out are from the Denver area). It is strictly devoted to straight edge bands and the whole lifestyle. I'm not sure how I ended up with all these preachy 'zines, but surprisingly, this one is pretty cool. ETHIC and DOWNSET are given appropriate accolades, and there is an extensive interview with the guys from EARTH CRISIS lauded as the writers' all time favorite band. And if you've ever considered the straight edge path, there is plenty of info in here to get you immersed heavily into the scene. I like this mag. The articles are intelligent and well thought out, and the overall look is ultimately punk with hand written articles and hand drawn art. Very Cool.

Torture Chamber #4 ($2 USA $3 Elsewhere, 137 25th St. NW Apt. 1B, Canton, OH 44709 USA) is a fanzine in the truest sense. It is essentially nothing more than reviews of demos and CD's released by bands completely unknown outside their own scenes. There is also a section of new releases by all the big boys of death, but this mag's attraction is the insight into so many new and upcoming metal bands. Over 50 bands are featured, with the most intriguing being DEATH KIDS OUT OF NEW YORK, whose singer/guitarist is the ripe old age of ten. All the reviews are done by one person, so what you would actually be getting in the way of music is somewhat questionable. There is also a state of the scene section, so to speak, that actually gives quite a bit of information on tons of bands, everything from upcoming releases to member changes. Not a bad little rag, especially if you have lots of extra cash to buy a ton of demos from new, unknown bands.

By far, the most impressive magazine, based on production, that I've seen this time around is ***Implosion #5*** ($14 USA $25 Elsewhere, One Year Subscription Rates, P.O. Box 533653, Orlando, FL, 32853 USA). This is not a 'zine by any means. It is a full color, glossy quarterly that spans music, art, fiction, and features rising up somewhere from the weirdest parts of the world. The explanation on the cover describes it as "A Journal Of The Bizarre And Eccentric". That is an understatement. I'm not even sure if it's appropriate to review this mag in Pit. The only bands in it are the Satan worshipping industrial band, THE ELECTRIC HELLFIRE CLUB, THE GENITORTURERS, who like to pierce genitalia during their live show, plus a nifty little article on Weird Al. However, if you've ever felt somewhat displaced, like you don't really belong anywhere, you may want this magazine. Featured articles this month include a story about a Mormon man who has six wives and sixteen children, a Shinto fertility festival in Japan with the celebration revolving around an 800 pound wooden penis, and a very serious quest for Dracula. There is also plenty of great short fiction, movie reviews (I'm sure you've never heard of these movies, with one possible exception being the movie about the woman who had sex with 251 guys in one night),and a great story on one very bizarre artist named Daniel Jaeger. This magazine is an extremely professional product, inside every aspect. The editing, layout, design, writing, and even the printing are all first rate. It might have something to do with the fact that everyone involved with the mag has some sort of college degree, but then again, maybe not. Superfreaks, take notice, this magazine was made just for you. But I'll give a fair warning, if you are even mildly intellectually challenged, you'll never get through even one issue.

There were three other magazines for review, ***Eat*** from Japan, ***Slammin'*** from Brazil, and ***Metal Hammer*** from Yugoslavia or somewhere near there (I couldn't even decipher what language it was, much less read it) and unfortunately I lost my fluency in those languages lifetimes ago. But they look really nice and have great pictures. That would be a resounding thumbs up for me. Great pictures must mean a great mag, right?

T. Morton

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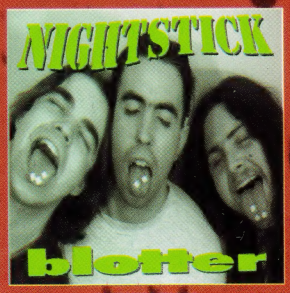

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